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**HEARING ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE
OLDER AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM**

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD IN MONTEREY PARK, CA, APRIL 6, 1993

Serial No. 103-7

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and Labor



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HEARING ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE OLDER AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM

TUESDAY, APRIL 6, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES,
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR,
Monterey Park, CA.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9 a.m., in Monterey Park Council Chambers, Monterey Park, California, Hon. Matthew G. Martinez, Chairman, presiding.

Members present: Representatives Martinez and Woolsey.

Staff present: Lester H. Sweeting, staff director, counsel; Daniel Adcock, legislative analyst; and Maxine Grant, chief of staff.

Chairman MARTINEZ. This meeting will come to order.

Good morning. I would like to welcome all of you here today to Monterey Park. Monterey Park is my home town and the place where we're having this meeting is where I began my public service.

First let me say that sitting here on the dais in this district in this city hall really is a great pleasure for me. When I was on the city council here in Monterey Park I was directly involved in the creation of this facility. And although I have, of course, on many occasions visited city hall, met in other rooms in the city hall, both officially and unofficially, this is the first time I have ever sat on a dais that I was really responsible for creating.

I am really proud of this facility and the other facilities that were built at the same time. It might interest you that, as part of the project that we developed the city hall, we also developed the senior citizen center at Langley. We also created a Brightwood Cafetorium and a Macy School Gymnasium. Of all the things that we included in that portfolio, those are the things that I am most proud of.

I want to take the time now to thank the mayor of Monterey Park, Fred Balderama, a good friend of mine, and the city council, of course, for allowing us to hold this hearing here at the city hall.

I believe that cooperation between the Federal and local governments is one of the ways that we can achieve success in reaching President Clinton's vision for a revitalized America. President Clinton spoke at his inaugural about making investments in our precious resources so that we can reap the dividends of those investments, throughout the remainder of the nineties and into the 21st century, I believe we can do that.

Today we are going to hear more about what the Federal Government can do to ensure that the quarter of a century investment in the Older American Volunteers Program continues to pay high dividends for the seniors who participate in these programs and for the citizens of all ages who are served by those seniors and for the country itself.

As we continue the reauthorization process for the Older American Volunteers Programs under Title II of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 which this committee has direct jurisdiction over this hearing is a part of a series that we will be holding here and around the country. We have already held one in Washington, DC.

We are joined this morning by a very distinguished colleague of mine, Lynn Woolsey, who is a freshman. Never mind that she's a freshman, she has already made her impact felt in Congress and in Washington, and I imagine in the near future you will see and hear and read great things about Lynn. I want to thank her for taking time out of her busy schedule, in fact, getting up at four this morning to be here with us today. And I know that she has a great interest in the issues surrounding the Older American Volunteers Program and that has been evidenced by her active participation in the past.

With us today are also six project directors and five volunteers representing the three volunteer programs operating under the Act. The Older American Volunteers Programs include three separate and distinct activities. The retired senior volunteer program provides an opportunity for persons 60 years of age and over to give of their time, expertise, and interests to a wide range of volunteer efforts. Volunteers in this program range from age 60 to the 90s working with community action agencies, nonprofit groups and other service deliverers. They apply their skills in the widest range of activities. The program is designed to benefit the volunteer participants by ensuring that they have an outlet for their tremendous resource of energy and talent and that they can continue to make a worthwhile contribution to the society and the community.

We will hear from—well, we were to hear from Ms. Bertha Martinez, but I understand that a substitute has been made for her and we will look forward to hearing from that person from the Casa Maravilla in Los Angeles.

Ms. Elia Serrano who is a project director at Casa Maravilla is with us today and Ms. Cecilia Mangan, project director of the RSVP of the San Gabriel Valley from Pasadena is with us. These witnesses will provide information about how this program operates in the Los Angeles area and what steps they believe are needed to ensure continued success over the next few years.

There are two specialized programs in this Act that will be addressed today. Senior Companions are also drawn from the poor senior populations. These volunteers provide companionship and nontechnical services to other seniors who are at risk of loss of independence or in danger of institutionalization because of frailty. To offer their insights with respect to this program we have Ms. Joan Aldrin, the senior companion project director for Los Angeles and Mr. Robert Brown who is a volunteer in the Los Angeles program.

The Foster Grandparent Program has a dual purpose. Low income seniors are selected, trained, and provided with a small cash supplement and other benefits in exchange for their services as caregivers to children with special needs. Foster grandparents work in a wide variety of situations where they can provide support to children with special needs, including children who are incarcerated or institutionalized.

Representing that program we will hear from Mr. Lewis G. Fontenot, who is actually the director of the Volunteer Action Center of Los Angeles and Ms. Vera Wright a volunteer at the Volunteer Action Center.

Ms. Pam Robinson, project director of the program at the Fred C. Nellis School, California Youth Authority in Whittier is with us also, as is Mr. Walter Hickey who is the project director of both Foster Grandparents and Senior Companion Programs at Sonoma Development Center in Eldridge.

Let me say at this time, Mr. Hickey is a constituent of Ms. Woolsey and I know that she is especially interested in the testimony from him.

I want to welcome each of you and before I do anything else I would like to ask if Ms. Woolsey has an opening statement?

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to compliment you on obtaining this wonderful city hall. I too come from the city council and our city hall does not compare to this at all.

Now, I also want to commend you for your leadership on the issue of older Americans programs and for holding this series of hearings. It's a special treat for me to be able to come back to my own home State to hear how Federal programs are working on a State and local level.

I also want to extend a heartfelt welcome to those of you who are here today who participate in older American volunteer programs and I would like to say a special hello to Walt Hickey who is project director of the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs in my district, that's Northern California, North of the Golden Gate Bridge. His programs have been in operations in Sonoma for 21 and 15 years respectively.

Senior programs enhance the lives of so many Americans both for those who receive the services and those who provide them. It is obvious that the money that the Federal Government spends on these programs is an investment, it is to protect and cultivate a precious and natural resource, our seniors. With the constant evolution of the family in this country one of the greatest consequences of the recent dissolution of many family networks is the lack of intergenerational communication. Young people have so much to learn from the wisdom of those Americans who have lived through the horrors of war, through the civil rights movement, society and those watershed events that have so distinctly shaped American society.

Programs such as Foster Grandparents and RSVP do so much to preserve inter-generational education and I wholeheartedly support efforts to expand these programs to include more seniors who wish to serve their community. I welcome our panel and I look forward to hearing your testimony.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey. As you can see she has a very deep interest in the affairs of the seniors and all the activities of the Subcommittee on Human Resources.

I want to commend Ms. Woolsey at this time, too, for choosing Human Resources as one of her subcommittees. It's not a glamorous subcommittee, it deals with some of the very hard issues facing our older Americans and our younger Americans and for that reason the people that take on that responsibility are to be congratulated for their great willingness to serve on this committee.

With this I would like to call our first panel and our first panel consists of Ms. Elia Serrano, Project Director of Casa Maravilla, Incorporated for the Retired Senior Volunteers Program from Los Angeles, California. If you will take a seat here on the end, Ms. Serrano. I also would like to call Ms. Cecilia Mangen, Project Director from the Retired Senior Volunteers Program from the San Gabriel Valley, Pasadena, California; Mr. Art De Ronde, a volunteer, Retired Senior Volunteers Program of the San Gabriel Valley from Azusa, California.

Ms. Serrano, we will begin with you.

STATEMENTS OF ELIA SERRANO, PROJECT DIRECTOR, CASA MARAVILLA, INC., RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA; CECILIA MANGEN, PROJECT DIRECTOR, RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM OF THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY, PASADENA, CALIFORNIA; AND ART DE RONDE, VOLUNTEER, RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM OF THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY, AZUSA, CALIFORNIA

Ms. SERRANO. My name is Elia Serrano and I am the project director for the Greater East Los Angeles Retired Senior Volunteers Program. I would like to address this committee on the importance and impact the retired senior volunteer program has had in the community.

Volunteers are the heartbeat of a community—any community. Our volunteer corps is energetic and predominantly Hispanic located in a low-income community. However, the language barrier does not interfere because the spirit of volunteerism does not know prejudice. These unique individuals are not only senior citizens, but their knowledge and caring takes form with the following duties: They assist the with—

Chairman MARTINEZ. Ms. Serrano?

Ms. SERRANO. Yes.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Could I interrupt you for just one minute?

Ms. SERRANO. Yes.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Could you bring the microphone just a little bit closer to you?

Ms. SERRANO. Closer. Right there.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Yes.

Ms. SERRANO. Is it on?

Chairman MARTINEZ. It is on. Can you hear Ms. Serrano in the back there? No?

Are these microphones on down there?

Just stay as close to it as you can.

Ms. SERRANO. Close. Okay. Do you want me to start again?

Chairman MARTINEZ. Yes, because I don't think anyone in the back heard you.

Ms. SERRANO. Okay. I'll start all over.

Good morning. My name is Elia Serrano and I am the project director for the Greater East Los Angeles Retired Senior Volunteers Program. I would like to address this committee on the importance and impact the retired senior volunteer program has had in the community.

Volunteers are the heartbeat of a community—any community. Our volunteer corps is energetic and predominantly Hispanic located in a low-income community. However, the language barrier does not interfere because the spirit of volunteerism does not know prejudice. These unique individuals are not only senior citizens, but their knowledge and caring takes form with the following duties: They assist with packaging and in the delivery of hot meals to the homebound elderly. They assist in preparing the kitchen area and serve meals throughout 10 congregate nutrition centers which are under the administration of the Casa Maravilla Nutrition Program. They are friendly visitors at the local convalescent hospitals and assist agencies who provide child care. They are the receptionists who greet the public with the first smile in the morning. They are the creative groups who provide handmade quilts and slippers to the local hospitals in homebound elderly for the annual Christmas Spirit Project.

One volunteer is so dedicated that even after the loss of his right leg in March of 1992 that would not allow him to stop his weekly trips into Chino to provide—or in order to provide the distribution of bread to the agencies in East Los Angeles. They are the senior volunteers who do not allow their age to get in the way of giving back to their beloved community.

We have 22 volunteers who are between the ages of 80 and 92 years of age and still—RSVP volunteers are a precious commodity who are worth their weight in gold. In a country where the slogan seems to be, what can I receive? The volunteer model is, how can I give? This question can easily be answered if the older American volunteer programs continue to flourish throughout this great country of ours.

We need to get back to grassroots and work as a community with the many resources to offer our and youth and the elderly. I believe that during this time of recession we must look at the value of the volunteer within the working structure of our agencies. They are truly an integral part of this community.

It is important to continue allocating funds to action. They have provided an effective administration and always provide technical assistance which I have requested. My program specialist is Virginia Martinez Victorin is refreshing and knowledgeable in her field.

In closing I have seen and know the need for the OAVP in the community. Reauthorize the OAVP so that the volunteers can continue to provide their talents and dedication to all communities.

Thank you for allowing me to speak on behalf of the Greater East Los Angeles Retired Senior Volunteers Program.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Serrano. Ms. Mangen.

Ms. MANGEN. Good morning. My name is Cecilia Mangen and have been the Director of the San Gabriel Valley RSVP since mid-

December of last year. Prior to that, I served 4 years as Chairman of the Advisory Council for this RSVP, as a member of the United Way Council on Aging, as assistant Director of a Council on Aging in Louisiana with six senior centers, and as a paid volunteer manager for the past 5 years.

The San Gabriel Valley Chapter of RSVP covers the majority of Congressman Martinez' District including the cities of Alhambra, Azusa, El Monte, Irwindale, Monterey Park, Rosemead and San Gabriel. We serve seniors and agencies in the area bounded to the north by the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, to the east by Glendora, to the south by Rowland Heights, and to the west by La Canada-Flintridge. Over 600 active RSVP volunteers give of their time and energies to more than 150 nonprofit and civic organizations in 29 communities in the San Gabriel Valley. Our volunteers provide over 150,000 hours of community service annually.

I am here to talk about the impact of our program and other RSVP chapters on their local communities, and the need for our continuation and increased support.

Our volunteers serve as mentors for kids, they are ESL and literacy tutors, nutrition aides, senior advocates, drivers, and clerical assistants. They offer homework assistance, deliver meals to the homebound, provide patient services, do telephone reassurance, act as guides at museums and art galleries, provide information and referral and home visitation, take their pets to visit patients in nursing homes, provide employment services, work at blood drives, and supply musical entertainment to convalescent hospitals.

They work in schools, libraries, hospitals, nursing homes, senior centers, police departments, retirement homes, thrift shops, museums, employment services agencies, preschools, health departments and health education agencies, nutrition and food programs, shelters, art galleries and mental health clinics.

Evaluations of our program conducted over the last 3 years provide us with information about the program's effectiveness. When asked about the impact of RSVP volunteers on their programs, our agencies replied:

"I have 38 RSVP volunteers serving at my organization and I wouldn't be able to get along without them." That's from a food bank/thrift shop in San Gabriel.

"The RSVP program has been very effective within my organization. My RSVP volunteers are helpful and positive." Case Management Program, City of Alhambra.

"Our volunteers are normally job seekers; when they find a job they no longer volunteer. We appreciate the longevity of RSVP volunteers." This is an employment services agency in Pasadena.

I don't have to tell you about the increased needs for volunteers in these agencies. Contributions are down, and staff and services are being cut back. Add to this an ever-growing array of community social service needs such as employment services, substance abuse treatment, literacy, advocacy and others and we realize that our communities' needs will not be met unless we continue to effectively utilize and increase our utilization of volunteers.

But what about the volunteers themselves—those who are supposed to benefit most from RSVP? They say:

"I am a tap dancer with the Sunshine Senior Band" this is a group of volunteers that entertains at nursing homes. "Love it. I am lucky."

"I love to help, be busy, love the company of others."

"It's been a pleasure to be an RSVP volunteer. First class organization."

"I am 74 years old and enjoy doing RSVP volunteer work 3 days per week."

"Would like to help more, but I have limitations."

"This is good in more ways than one. It keeps my mind alert and strengthens me physically by helping others."

According to our Mission Statement, "The Retired Senior Volunteers Program exists to provide a variety of opportunities for retired persons age 60 or older to participate more fully in the life of their community through significant volunteer service." We have enabled volunteers to participate in a variety of opportunities in the community. But more than that, RSVP provides a unique community service.

We offer reimbursement for transportation and meals to allow those volunteers who request it to more easily participate in volunteer service. We also provide excess personal, accident and automobile liability insurance. We offer annual recognition and special events to our volunteers. But most important, we act as a volunteer employment services agency to match the special skills and talents of each volunteer to the right job, follow up to make sure the job fits, and can also offer ongoing inservice training programs to both volunteers and agency staff. We can also help create unique and innovative programs to meet community needs and then help staff them with our RSVP volunteers.

We coordinate effectively with other volunteer programs and services provided to youth, older Americans and others through our contracts (Memorandums of Understanding) with volunteer agencies and civic organizations, and through other community partnerships. In our case, after 18 years being sponsored by the Volunteer Center, and another 2½ years sponsored by Foothill Area Community Services, we have, since October, been sponsored by the Pasadena Senior Center. This is a perfect marriage in that our mission and their mission coincide as we are both providing services and opportunities for area seniors.

I wanted to make two brief comments on volunteerism and national service. ACTION is in a perfect position to coordinate all national volunteer service efforts. There are many of us who have been involved in volunteer management for several years. ACTION should be encouraged to work closely with the Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA), the Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA), the Old American Volunteers Program Project Directors and others who already have a wealth of management experience in managing volunteers and can help in developing a national service initiative. It is also important to remember that not all volunteers are young people and any national service initiative should address volunteerism at all ages.

Our project has been in operation in the San Gabriel Valley for 21 years. At our annual recognition on April 16, we will honor nine 20-year volunteers, and six 21-year volunteers. This is even more

impressive when you consider that this length of service is longer than most paid positions nowadays. We must be doing something right.

RSVP was conceived to keep seniors active in their communities after retirement. One of my favorite quotes on community service is by Mark Twain. He said, "The degree to which society is judged to be civilized is in direct proportion to the degree to which its members volunteer to help one another." We are in the business of enriching seniors lives and meeting community needs. Our seniors provide a lifetime of experience and a wealth of talents. Please let us continue to do our job, and give us a chance to try and do it better.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Cecilia Mangen follows:]

Oral Testimony for Congressional Hearing on April 6, 1993

Submitted by Cecilia Mangen

My name is Cecilia Mangen and I have been the Director of the San Gabriel Valley RSVP since mid-December of last year. Prior to that, I served four years as Chairman of the Advisory Council for this RSVP, as a member of the United Way Council on Aging, as assistant director of a Council on Aging in Louisiana with six senior centers, and as a paid volunteer manager for the past five years.

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Cecilia Mangen

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An Employment Services Agency in Pasadena

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Cecilia Mangen

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Cecilia Mangen

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Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you. Ms. Mangen, and did I pronounce that right?

Ms. MANGEN. Mangen, yes you did.

Chairman MARTINEZ. All right. Mr. De Ronde.

Mr. DE RONDE. Good morning. My name is Art De Ronde. I have been the East Valley Area Coordinator for the San Gabriel Valley RSVP for the past year. Most of my professional experience was as International Personnel Manager for Bechtel Corporation, which included 20 years of service in Southeast Asia. I retired 10 years ago and was able to relax for a whole 9 months when my daughter told me about the Retired Senior Volunteers Program.

May I ad lib for a moment. When she called me, I said to her, "RSVP? I don't want to sit around and write invitations."

[Laughter.]

Mr. DE RONDE. That's how much I knew about them.

I visited the office located in La Verne in the Pomona Valley and they placed me at the Pomona Valley Hospital.

Shortly after, in 1984, the Claremont Police Department expressed an interest in organizing a senior volunteer patrol to augment its existing and undermanned police staff. City managers are constantly striving to develop ways to enhance the effectiveness of their organizations. This is also true within the law enforcement profession. The problem is maximizing one's service level without incurring a financial burden.

The City of Claremont studied an ongoing senior patrol in the City of Ojai and had a strong desire to implement a similar program but lacked the time and expertise to put it together. I accepted this challenge as an RSVP volunteer, and proceeded to write a procedures and training manual. In about 4 months, 16 seniors, age 60 and over were in training, and 3 months later they were out patrolling the City of Claremont. They were considered the "eyes and ears" of the local police.

Since the inception of the Claremont senior volunteer patrol, I have organized and trained similar patrols in Azusa, located in Congressman Martinez' District, Barstow, Chino, Fontana, Upland, La Verne and Pomona.

Volunteers are trained in basic radio codes, and radio use procedures as well as fingerprinting, vacation house checks, home security surveys, traffic control and many "in-house" clerical tasks. This, in turn, helps to free regular officers to focus more attention on important duties they were trained for. These volunteers patrol in pairs and do not carry any weapons. They wear uniforms and drive in police vehicles. When they encounter any problem areas, they use their car or hand radio, call for police backup and move out of the area.

Currently, the Azusa police department utilizes services of 15 to 20 RSVP volunteers. The efforts of all senior volunteer patrols have both complimented the work of officers and police staff and enhanced the ideals of community safety and security. These units are very well received and result in important budget savings to each city. It has been estimated the average savings is about \$50,000 a year to each city involved. In the near future, RSVP plans to organize similar programs in cities located in areas including South Pasadena, Alhambra and Monterey Park.

After 4 years as an RSVP volunteer, I went back to work full-time as the Director of the Pomona Valley RSVP, and left a year ago for my current, part-time position. The Senior Volunteers Patrol is only one example of RSVP's positive impact on its community and on its senior volunteers. I have witnessed the effect of many other RSVP volunteers and programs on the quality of life in our communities. I urge those in a position to do so to advocate for this vital program's continuance and strengthening.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Arthur De Ronde follows:]

STATEMENT OF ARTHUR DE RONDE

My name is Art De Ronde and I have been the East Valley Area Coordinator for the San Gabriel Valley RSVP for the past year. Most of my professional experience was as the International Personnel Manager for Bechtel Corporation, which included 20 years of service in Southeast Asia. I retired 10 years ago and was able to relax for a whole 9 months when my daughter told me about the Retired Senior Volunteers Program. I visited the office located in La Verne in the Pomona Valley and they placed me at the Pomona Valley Hospital.

Shortly after, in 1984, the Claremont Police Department expressed an interest in organizing a senior volunteer patrol to augment its existing, and undermanned, police staff. City Managers are constantly striving to develop ways to enhance the effectiveness of their organizations. This is also true within the law enforcement profession. The problem is maximizing one's service level without incurring a financial burden.

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Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. De Ronde. You know on that last comment it's only one example, but it's a good one. And you know, when we talk about the \$50,000 that's estimated to be saved, I doubt that we spend that much money on the program.

Mr. DE RONDE. That's very much correct.

Chairman MARTINEZ. So it's one of those things that the President was talking about when he talks about investment which re-

turns to us in terms of service a great deal more than we invest into it.

Mr. DE RONDE. Yes.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I am really impressed with that and I'll tell you why. Years ago when I was on the city council here, George Westphal, a good friend of mine who was a colleague on the city council, talked about and we could never get it off the ground because we couldn't find enough support for it—about doing a survey of all the people that live in Monterey Park because here in Monterey Park and especially in the highlands over here, we have people who have a lot of technical expertise. Now, they are career people that have worked in jobs, even some of them dealing with government and government services, and we thought if we did this survey of what these people actually do that at some point in time these people might be able to contribute some service to the community.

We initially started out thinking about it in terms of seeking out the best people—the best qualified people for the commissions that we were appointing people to. Somehow we spoke in vain, but here is an example where somebody else took that same idea and worked it to the advantage of several cities. So I must commend you for that. This is a good idea.

Maybe in the future, I think, more cities will do exactly that, seeking out the talented people that are within their community and especially those that are retired that have the time to volunteer. And on that I would like to ask you a question because, you know, one of the big problems in all the volunteer programs that we try to encourage people to participate in was their lack of time when they're younger to give as a volunteer. They have jobs, they have social lives, they have a lot of things going for them and somehow can't seem to find the time. They do volunteer to a certain extent, but not—they're not constant and they're not dependable.

In that regard, would you say from your own experience that people that are older are generally more reliable volunteers?

Mr. DE RONDE. No doubt in my mind, sir, no doubt.

Chairman MARTINEZ. How about you, Ms. Mangen?

Ms. MANGEN. Absolutely, yes.

Ms. SERRANO. Definitely.

Chairman MARTINEZ. In that regard, let me ask you a question that has come up in the first hearing and even before the first hearing, but it was discussed in the first hearing.

The dropping of the age to be eligible for these programs from 60 to 55, in turn I'd like to hear each of your comments on that, starting with you Ms. Serrano.

Ms. SERRANO. I believe that volunteers, to me, if you do have to set a limit on it, the 60—the volunteers that are 60 years of age or older, they would interact very well with the seniors that are 55 because even at some of the social centers or the senior centers that is, when we have social dances or just gatherings, they seem to interact well with a younger senior and that gives them more energy. It does help. It really does help and sometimes the older seniors, like I say, the older seniors, they need the guidance of a

younger senior so that they can work hand in hand in providing services at any community.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Would you find any problem in—see, because what I'm talking about is the discussion has been to drop the eligibility for these programs from 60 to 55. Would you see any problem with that? Could you envision any problem with that?

Ms. SERRANO. I would think with reimbursement. If you do have more of an able-bodied volunteer at 55 that would mean that you would have more seniors that are still driving, still being able to get around on their own as you would a 60 year old. Some of them are just a little bit more afraid to drive.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Now, be careful now, you're talking about—

[Laughter.]

Chairman MARTINEZ. Now, I'm 64 and I can still drive a car.

[Laughter.]

Ms. SERRANO. But with reimbursement I think that would be a problem. That would be a problem.

Chairman MARTINEZ. In what way would it be a problem? They would be competing against the older seniors for the—

Ms. SERRANO. Yes, exactly. Exactly.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Ms. Mangel?

Ms. MANGEN. I believe that that really would be the only problem with dropping the age would be being able to find enough funds to bring the additional volunteers into the program and provide the services that we do provide to them.

The definition of senior citizen changes from agency to agency. I know at Pasadena Senior Center, if you're 50 you're eligible for senior services and membership at the center. So I don't see a problem with dropping the age to 55 other than the increased financial burden.

I think it would be good, although I'm not too sure how many people are retiring at that age, I think people are hanging onto their jobs, those that they have, as long as they can these days.

Chairman MARTINEZ. That's true and though there are some particular professions that do retire at an early age, obviously one is law enforcement, military is another and those people have a lot of expertise that they could provide. And the only problem is, and that's an interesting point that the compensation—or competing for the compensation against the older citizens—there might be, if we tried to do that, a qualifier with it, so you brought up a good point.

Mr. De Ronde, do you have a comment on that?

Mr. DE RONDE. May I say in 2 more days I will be 76 years of age, so maybe I'm a little old fashioned.

As far as the police program is concerned, I would see a great advantage to younger personnel, but by the same token I have to ask myself the question, at 55 who wants to volunteer. If I was 55 I would still be very active.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Well, you're very active now.

Mr. DE RONDE. Thank you, sir.

[Laughter.]

Chairman MARTINEZ. Well, that is the other thing of finding a reliable, dependable source of volunteers at that age, but would you

say it's something worth pursuing if we could get even just a few at that age——

Mr. DE RONDE. Without a doubt. Without a doubt.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you. Let me turn to Ms. Woolsey at this time.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, I'd like to say that I think that defining the age of a senior is a very personal thing. I sat here and you started talking about 55-year-olds being seniors. Well, I was 55 on my birthday on election day and when I heard you say that I thought, oh, goodness I wish I hadn't gotten up at four in the morning to hear this.

[Laughter.]

Ms. WOOLSEY. I mean, good grief. Well, I have some thoughts. One, my first thought when I was listening to this wonderful panel is the millions of dollars that would have otherwise been subsidized by our governments had these volunteers not been available. You have really made a contribution. The Federal funding that supports these programs is good for seniors and for the people they serve. This also saves in the long run a lot of money. So in my question on 55 being the age would be, would you then maybe have a less dependable population because you may have people who are actually looking for paid employment.

Ms. MANGEN, I had a question when you were talking about employment services. I didn't know what you meant by that. Would you explain that to me?

Ms. MANGEN. We have an employment services department at the senior center that finds—for people 50 and over who are looking for paid employment, it helps counsel them. There is also a very viable nonprofit agency in Pasadena called Women at Work that works with people of all ages, but they utilize RSVP volunteers.

Ms. WOOLSEY. So you're on their mailing list or they call you when they——

Ms. MANGEN. They are one of our agencies.

Ms. WOOLSEY. That's good. That's good. And Art, I too come from a personnel background. I was a human resources manager for 11 years and had my own firm for 10 years and you proved to me that personnel people are truly "people." I really compliment all three of you.

Now, I have a question about something I'm very interested in and it's the issue of childcare and childcare programs with inter-generational components. Do any of you have experience in your agencies with these programs and if so, how do they work?

Ms. MANGEN. Yes, we do. We have a work station in East Los Angeles that's called Plaza Community Center and there is a group of ladies there that are under rehabilitation for drug and alcohol abuse and they have small children ages 3 months to 5 years of age and one of our seniors—our RSVP seniors, they participate in providing reading to them, they care for the children while the mothers receive counseling while they are taught to prepare a nutritious meal for that infant and for themselves. Without the volunteer being there it really presents a difficult task for the community still trying to work together coming in and helping out, but this lady is 82 years old, she's there 4 hours a day, Monday through

Friday, and she's like a grandmother to them. She comforts them in their time of need, she talks to the mothers as well and she has become really an asset to that community.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you. Do any of the rest of you have any of the—

Mr. DE RONDE. I have no involvement I'm sorry to say.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Right.

Ms. SERRANO. Something close to it, not childcare, per se, but after-school homework assistance is provided by the Boys and Girls Club in Pasadena and RSVP volunteers work with the young people that are sent over from local elementary schools that spend the rest of their afternoon at the club. And in addition to recreational opportunities, there's the homework assistance program.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, that's exactly what I'm talking about. And with the preschool programs getting involved so that they are used and our children don't just interface with people their parents' ages or younger that they interface with grandparents. I thank you.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey.

Let me ask a question along the same lines because when you answer the question for Ms. Woolsey it brought to mind something that I've always thought about in the various responsibilities that I had in Congress. In linking people or agencies that are providing services to people who need them. A lot of times we get into this duplication and their services are duplicative and they're really not communicating with each other. It brought to mind, too, when you were talking about the nutritional services that you provide at Casa Maravilla, now we fund—the Federal Government funds the area agency on aging to provide nutritional services, a senior nutritional program. Are you getting the meals that you're providing at Casa Maravilla, are you getting moneys through them? Is that coordinated with them?

Ms. SERRANO. No. Right now the caterer that provides those meals there at the center they are providing a donation towards the program itself. They are providing anywhere between 100 and 120 meals per month and that's for every 10 hours of volunteer service the volunteer receives a meal ticket for that.

Chairman MARTINEZ. But the volunteer is a senior who is eligible for that nutritional program?

Ms. SERRANO. Yes, yes, they are.

Chairman MARTINEZ. And so the question is here, why are we not coordinating with that program so that they can provide part of the—

Ms. SERRANO. We are—they are our sponsor and they provide coordination of services through transportation and the nutrition program itself.

Chairman MARTINEZ. And the nutrition program?

Ms. SERRANO. Yes, we work hand in hand together.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Which caused me to wonder if in what we're doing from the Federal level, you know, because we have developed a program aimed or targeted at a certain population and we actually set out a criteria for that and a separate agency. The big thing I've found is that the agencies sometimes won't talk to each other. Even at a local level the different regional offices don't

talk to each other. If they're not coordinated and one of the things that we really need to do is make available somehow through memorandums of understanding and linkages with agencies in their communications that when they're serving the same population they're not being duplicative, that they are serving it together. I'd ask—there are several agencies, I think, that provide services to—programs that provide services to seniors. There's the Administration on Aging and Elder Care, there's the Points of Light Foundation, there's an Aging Commission on Volunteers. Do you find these things are fragmented and duplicative? Do you find that you have the ability at a local level to be able to tie all of them into the things you're doing?

Ms. SERRANO. Yes.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I'd like to comment a little bit on the Older American Act funding and some of the duplication and fragmentation that goes on in the communities. I think that when that was set up to provide nutrition services and transportation information referral and other services to the senior population funds were made available to agencies for service to the community. There is still competition for those funds and I believe that in some areas there is some duplication or some fragmentation of effort. It would be nice to coordinate all of the services under an umbrella and to have volunteer services included in other services to seniors. To take Points of Light and some of these other efforts and kind of put everything together under one umbrella. And like I said before, I think ACTION makes a lot of sense in terms of coordinating.

Somehow we're going to have to do that. In the reauthorization process we're going to have to provide some kind of mechanism that will create kind of that umbrella organization where these things can all be coordinated and funneled through to the same people they are serving by one program that the services of another program are available. Somehow it's not getting transmitted.

Let me ask another question that sometimes draws the ire of some people, especially English-only advocates in the country that don't realize we're a country of many languages and we were from the beginning. The original 13 colonies, if you went up and down the colonies you found people speaking different languages. Except for one vote, German would have been our national language and they decided at the time not to have a national language. There still is a necessity to communicate with people and the National Association of RSVP Directors, people like yourselves, support an amendment to the minority group participation section of the Domestic Service Volunteer Act that would authorize development of Older American Volunteers program materials targeted to individuals who don't speak English.

How do your projects, and especially yours, Ms. Serrano, you know, I imagine that in your area there are a lot of people that even if they do speak English they never got the full advantage of an education and probably dropped out at an early age. They speak English but it's kind of like a playground English, it's not academic English. And to understand written and printed materials it will probably be a lot easier for them to understand something in Spanish. Sometimes that's not true either because sometimes they didn't get an education in Spanish either. But the idea of providing

this, would this—would this do a service to those that the project currently serves?

Ms. SERRANO. Yes.

Chairman MARTINEZ. You can answer first, Ms. Serrano.

Ms. SERRANO. Yes. What I do is I do translate everything into Spanish. When we do monthly newsletters they are English and in Spanish and we produce about 2,000 calendars into the community so that we don't make them feel—those that don't speak Spanish that prefer to read the English only even though they are Hispanics, we try to make them feel comfortable. So we do—I have a non-senior volunteer that assists at Casa Maravilla Senior Center and he translates everything into Spanish for me.

We assist—together—we work on the project together and it is training me because of what you said. My Spanish is poco.

[Laughter.]

Ms. SERRANO. He is a great teacher and we put a lot of effort into all of our documentation from orientation—I do bilingual orientation as well as English and I'm sure I'll learn some Japanese and some Chinese.

Chairman MARTINEZ. If you think your Spanish is bad, you ought to listen to mine sometime.

[Laughter.]

Chairman MARTINEZ. I took classes that were offered by the State Department for Members of Congress who wanted to learn Spanish and when I showed up at the class being the only Hispanic there, people like John Bryant from Texas who feel because of a large Hispanic constituency he should learn and Tom DeLay from Texas, they looked at me and they said, "What are you doing here?"

[Laughter.]

Chairman MARTINEZ. I said, "I'm here to learn Spanish." I have a basic five-year-old vocabulary in Spanish, I guess, because about that time we went to school and from then on it was English only. So I can see from my own background and from talking to other people in limiting communities like this that there's a real need sometimes to translate. That's not to say that English is not our national language and that's not to say that that isn't the language that we need to communicate in. But that's just to say people who need extra help ought to get it.

Ms. MANGEN, in your experience how do you feel about this?

Ms. MANGEN. I think any agency that is working in the greater Los Angeles area needs the ability to communicate in different languages. I think that if we're to be truly grassroots and work in the communities and help out the agencies that need assistance that we need to be able to provide volunteers who can speak the language of the community that they're in and work with the clients that are coming in from that area. I think a lot of the older volunteers may not have the English background, so we would need to be able to have the other languages available.

Chairman MARTINEZ. It would be a great help. I walk precincts and I find that, you know, we think in terms of the Southwest Spanish being the other language that we have to have materials printed in, but when I walked precincts I found there were a lot of people that spoke a lot of different languages. Older people that

felt trapped in their houses because they had no powers of the English language and although their children did and their grandchildren did, they didn't. And so it handicapped them. I think that's important.

Mr. De Ronde?

Mr. DE RONDE. At the present moment I have some experience in having volunteers out in Azusa that work out of the center, the libraries, the schools, in English-speaking classes.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Is that so? That's really good. You need to encourage them to learn English.

Mr. DE RONDE. Definitely.

Chairman MARTINEZ. In the time when I was walking precincts I would ask people about going to night school, adult school, and they would say in some cases that they had put their name in, but they were waiting to be accepted. Then I found out that there's a great big backlog, that we don't have the classroom facilities nor the teachers to provide for everybody that needs or wants to learn English and so we've got to do something about that, too.

I want to thank this panel. Ms. Woolsey, do you have any other questions?

Ms. WOOLSEY. I have, Mr. Chairman, one more question for Mr. De Ronde. Do you consider expanding your senior patrol to diversion programs for youth? That's such a good interface for the young people to work with the seniors.

Mr. DE RONDE. I've studied this request, Ms. Woolsey. Many people have come in to me and asked about using younger people in the police stations. I guess, again, because of my age I——

Ms. WOOLSEY. That isn't—that's not my question.

Mr. DE RONDE. [continuing] I don't look too strongly at it.

Ms. WOOLSEY. My question was, not to make younger people be volunteers——

Mr. DE RONDE. Excuse me.

Ms. WOOLSEY. [continuing] to have your patrol, your senior patrol program expanded possibly so that it could be a diversion—a youth diversion program working with youth who are in trouble to keep them out of further——

Mr. DE RONDE. By all means. We are very active right now——

Ms. WOOLSEY. You do that?

Mr. DE RONDE. [continuing] with the Azusa drug and task force.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Oh, all right. Good.

Mr. DE RONDE. We work with their children once a week and we're looking at that very strongly, yes, ma'am.

Ms. WOOLSEY. That seems like a really positive use of volunteers.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Yes, I think that's a natural follow up to some of the responsibilities—not responsibilities, but activities that RSVP gets into. They work with children at risk; right?

Ms. SERRANO. Yes, we do.

Chairman MARTINEZ. And in many cases that helps. You know, these young children sometime need somebody older to act as a mentor for them and to give them advice, somebody they can talk to and a lot of times it's hard for them to talk to their parents. I know my grandkids have a lot easier time talking to me than they do to their parents. So it's something that would follow naturally that kind of a program you have. One of the things that this com-

mittee also has jurisdiction over is the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Act. And one of the things we found in the hearings that we had held on the reauthorization of that Act is that there just needs to be more volunteers in the community to actually act as counselors and advisers and just generally help for these young people to help themselves gain the extra strength they need to break away from gang activities and other things. And the RSVP program is already doing that so it would be a natural extension to have a program like yours move into that same area in the neighborhood gangs. So I think that's a very good idea, Ms. Woolsey.

I want to thank this panel very much. Your testimony here has been valuable to us. It will help us in providing the evidence we need as we move forward to reauthorize the Act and provide new ideas for the Act in the reauthorization. Thank you again.

Our next panel consists of Mr. Walter Hickey who is a project director of the Foster Grandparent Senior Companion Program, at Sonoma Development Center in the Department of Developmental Services in the State of California in Eldridge, California. Joining him is Ms. Joan Aldrin, Project Director, Senior Companion Program of Los Angeles, from Los Angeles California and Mr. Robert Brown who is a volunteer of the Senior Companion Program of Los Angeles at Los Angeles California.

Mr. Hickey, we'll start with you.

STATEMENTS OF WALTER R. HICKEY, PROJECT DIRECTOR, FOSTER GRANDPARENT/SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM, SONOMA DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER, DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, ELDRIDGE, CALIFORNIA; JOAN ALDRIN, PROJECT DIRECTOR, SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM OF LOS ANGELES, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA; AND ROBERT BROWN, VOLUNTEER, SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM OF LOS ANGELES, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Mr. HICKEY. Thank you. Chairman Martinez, Congresswoman Woolsey, I would like to thank you for the invitation to speak before the subcommittee today.

As the project director of the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs at Sonoma Developmental Center since 1983, I can attest to the success of the Older American Volunteers Programs. I have had the opportunity to hear success stories from many foster grandparents and senior companions in the volunteer work they do with their disabled clients.

As an example, Foster Grandparent Theresa Sciallo from Petaluma, California opened the doors of her home as a site for domestic skill training. Sonoma Developmental Center clients who attended high school programs in Petaluma would come to her home twice a week for 2 hours. At her home they would work on developing their skills in domestic chores: preparing snacks or lunches, doing dishes, light cleaning and raking leaves in the yard. The students also had the opportunity to develop table manners as they ate the food they prepared. This program was developed to provide a realistic training site for institutionalized children who are being prepared for community living. The home atmosphere was a won-

derful way to teach domestic skills necessary for the children to succeed in a community placement.

Another example is Foster Grandparent Mary Stone, a 15-year veteran of the program. One of her clients is severely physically disabled and is unable to communicate verbally. He has a rudimentary communication device affixed to the tray of his wheelchair. Mary works with this youngster in developing his vocabulary. As the years progress the youngster's vocabulary has increased because of Mary's persistent and patient work with him. Mary proudly demonstrates to me her foster grandson's abilities to communicate. She likes to finish the demonstration by asking him, "Who do you like the best?" The youngster always points to the photo of his foster grandmother Mary.

Included in my written testimony are other stories specific to the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs at Sonoma Developmental Center.

There is no doubt of the success of the Older American Volunteers Programs. For 27 years the Foster Grandparent Program has been flourishing nationwide; 21 years at Sonoma Developmental Center. For the Senior Companion Programs their success has been nationwide for 20 years; 15 years at Sonoma Developmental Center.

At a large development center, acute care hospital or juvenile detention center, well-meaning staff are beleaguered by administrative duties, meetings and adjunct responsibilities. The one-to-one personal attention youngsters in these settings desperately need is unfortunately not provided by staff because of mandates on their time. What better person to give an attentive ear to a disabled child or an incarcerated youth than a person with time on their hands; time to be patient, time to be gentle and caring, time to be nonjudgmental, and time to accept that youngster the way they are.

Our society has a valuable natural resource waiting to be tapped for the good of our country. This resource is older adults. Older Americans who have spent a lifetime developing a wealth of skills. They have the skills and are eager to use them. They thrive at the opportunity to use their skills with disadvantaged children.

When you bring together two diverse segments of our society, the older adult and a child with special needs, you have the makings of an intergenerational program that benefits all involved.

Whether it is in a Head Start program or cuddling HIV babies in the hospital, Foster Grandparents can make miracles happen. This has been repeatedly shown in the 27 years of the program's existence. Foster Grandparent directors are eager to expand into Head Start programs because of the success they see. Children blossom from the attention paid to them by their Foster Grandparents. Foster Grandparents are not, nor ever will be, "Greedy Geezers." They are selfless; giving of their time and energy to help children that are less fortunate than the low-income seniors themselves.

The Older American Volunteers programs should be integrated with President Clinton's National Service initiatives. You have the proven track record of the OAVP programs that shows how senior volunteerism benefits everyone involved. To exclude these programs would be a drastic oversight. The Foster Grandparent Program alone is an intergenerational program that benefits our Na-

tion's youth. This program had demonstrated repeatedly how youth benefit from the contact with older adults.

A National Service Initiative should be available to all citizens, not only the youth of our country. Our children are important. They need nurturance and guidance so that they can grow up to become responsible adults. Having them pay back college loans through volunteerism is a wonderful way to learn responsibility.

Excluding older adults from a National Service Initiative would be counterproductive. Instead, programs that combine older adults volunteering with young adults would be most productive. The young people could benefit from the experience of the older adults. The older volunteers could benefit from the enthusiasm and initiative of the young adults. It could be a mutually beneficial combination.

As an example, I became a VISTA Volunteer when I graduated from college. The majority of my peers were in my age group, but there were several older adults. From the older VISTA Volunteers, I learned how to effectively deal with cultural issues, to develop educational programs and medical programs. These older peers were priceless resources that I could go to, tap their information banks and learn to do my job in a new and better way.

The National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors represents directors from all across the country. The Association has presented the White House Office of National Service with comments on a Discussion Outline of March 11, 1993. I fully concur with these comments as written by Ann Smith, President of the National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors on March 17, 1993.

The comments discuss senior service issues and infrastructure issues. A copy of this memorandum to Jack Lew, General Counsel, White House Office of National Service is included in my written testimony.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the Subcommittee on Human Resources, Committee on Education and Labor on the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Services Act.

[The prepared statement of Walter Hickey follows:]

STATEMENT OF WALTER HICKEY

As the Project Director of the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs at Sonoma Developmental Center since 1983, I can attest to the success of the Older American Volunteers Programs. I have had the opportunity to hear "Success Stories" from many Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions in the volunteer work they do with their disabled clients.

As an example, Foster Grandparent Theresa Sciallo from Petaluma, CA, opened the doors of her home as a site for domestic skill training. Sonoma Developmental Center clients who attended high school programs in Petaluma would come to her home twice a week for 2 hours. At her home, they would work on developing their skills in domestic chores: preparing snacks or lunches, doing dishes, light cleaning and raking leaves in the yard. The students also had the opportunity to develop table manners as they ate the food they prepared.

This program was developed to provide a realistic training site for institutionalized children who were being prepared for community living. The home atmosphere was a wonderful way to teach domestic skills necessary for the children to succeed in a community placement.

Another example is Foster Grandparent Mary Stone, a 15-year veteran of the program. One of her clients is severely physically disabled and is unable to communicate verbally. He has a rudimentary communication device affixed to the tray of his wheelchair. Mary works with this youngster in developing his vocabulary. As the years progress, the youngster's vocabulary has increased because of Mary's persistent and patient work with him. Mary proudly demonstrates to me her Foster Grandson's abilities to communicate. She likes to finish the demonstration by asking him, "Who do you like the best?" The youngster always points to the photo of his Foster Grandmother Mary.

Included in the written testimony are other stories specific to the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs at Sonoma Developmental Center.

There is no doubt of the success of the OAVP programs. For 27 years, the Foster Grandparent Program has been flourishing nationwide; 21 years at Sonoma Developmental Center. For the Senior Companion Programs, their success has been nationwide for 20 years, 15 years at Sonoma Developmental Center.

At a large developmental center, acute care hospital or juvenile detention center, well-meaning staff are beleaguered by administrative duties, meetings and adjunct duties. The one-to-one personal attention youngsters in these settings desperately need is, unfortunately, not provided by staff because of mandates on their time. What better person to give an attentive ear to a disabled child or an incarcerated youth is a person with time on their hands. Time to be patient, time to be gentle and caring, time to be nonjudgmental, and time to accept that youngster the way they are.

Our society has a valuable natural resource waiting to be tapped for the good of our country. This resource is older adults. Older Americans who have spent a lifetime developing a wealth of skills. They have the skills and are eager to use them. They thrive at the opportunity to use their skills with disadvantaged children.

When you bring together two diverse segments of our society, the older adult and the child with special needs, you have the makings of an Intergenerational Program that benefits all involved.

Whether it is in a Head Start program, or cuddling HIV babies in the hospital, Foster Grandparents can make miracles happen. This has been repeatedly shown in the 27 years of its existence. Foster Grandparent Directors are eager to expand into Head Start programs because of the success they see. Children blossom from the attention paid to them by their Foster Grandparents. Foster Grandparents are not, nor ever will be, "Greedy Geezers." They are selfless; giving of their time and energy to help children that are less fortunate than the low-income seniors themselves.

The Older American Volunteers programs should be integrated with President Clinton's National Service Initiative. You have the proven track record of the OAVP programs that shows how senior volunteerism benefits everyone involved. To exclude these programs would be a drastic oversight. The Foster Grandparent Program alone is an intergenerational program that benefits our Nation's youth. This program has demonstrated repeatedly how youth benefit from the contact with older adults.

A National Service Initiative should be available to all citizens, not only the youth of our country. Our children are important. They need nurturance and guidance so they can grow up to become responsible adults. Having them pay back college loans through volunteerism is a wonderful way to learn responsibility.

Excluding older adults from a National Service Initiative would be counterproductive. Instead, programs that combine older adults volunteering with young adults would be most productive. The young people could benefit from the experience of the older adults. The older volunteers could benefit from the enthusiasm and initiative of the young adults. It could be a mutually beneficial combination.

As an example, I became a VISTA Volunteer when I graduated from college. The majority of my peers were in my age group, but there were several older adults. From the older VISTA Volunteers, I learned how to effectively deal with cultural issues, development of educational programs and medical programs. These older peers were priceless resources that I could go to, tap their information banks and learn to do my job in a new and better way.

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The comments discuss senior service issues and infrastructure issues. A copy of this memorandum to Jack Lew, General Counsel, White House Office of National Service is included in my written testimony.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Subcommittee on Human Resources, Committee on Education and Labor on the reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Services Act.

Suggested amendments to the Domestic Volunteer Service Act

National Association of Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Directors
National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors
National Association of Senior Companion Project Directors

1. A one-time stipend increase for Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers, with coverage of non-ACTION funded volunteers;
2. An increase in the current \$250,000 Public Relations floor;
3. Strengthening of sec. 223 (Minority Group Participation) to authorize development of materials targeted to individuals whose primary language is not English;
4. Expanded eligibility for PNS Grant awards to all projects, notwithstanding ACTION's resource allocation formula, including non-ACTION projects;
5. Expand PNS categories to include such areas as the environment, ethnic outreach, criminal justice activities, homelessness, and apprenticeship programs involving older volunteers with young people;
6. Strengthen section 226 (Cost of Living Adjustments) to ensure that when new funds are available, prior to funding new projects, cost of living adjustments must first be allocated to existing projects;
7. Addition of a new provision to ensure the copyright of the Foster Grandparent, Senior Companion, and Retired Senior Volunteer Program name.
8. Addition of a new provision to allow project grants to cover the costs of liability insurance.
9. Addition of a new provision to institutionalize a working relationship between ACTION and the National Directors Associations (similar to relationship between Administration on Aging and National Associations of State Units on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging.)
10. Addition of a new provision to support Foster Grandparent Program tie-in with Head Start.
11. Addition of a new provision to support Senior Companion tie-in with Medicaid Community-based care Waiver program.
12. Rename and restructure ACTION so that it becomes the local point for federally-supported volunteer initiatives, including new national service initiatives.
13. Addition of a new provision to encourage co-volunteering between existing ACTION-supported programs, such as VISTA and the Older American Volunteer programs.
14. Addition of a new provision to facilitate a research component within the Domestic Volunteer Service Act.
15. Addition of a new provision to provide authority to ACTION to hold national training conferences on volunteerism.
16. Addition of a new provision to provide flexibility so that individuals may participate in OAVP programs even if they are still in the regular work force (ex. part-time workers).
17. Change reference "Older American Volunteer Programs" to "National Senior Volunteer Corps."



National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors

March 17, 1993

TO: Jack Lew, General Counsel
White House Office of National Service

FR: National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors

RE: Comments on March 11 Discussion Outline

Thank you for taking the time on March 16 to meet with the Board of Directors of the National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors.

Our constituency is looking for a clear message from President Clinton verifying that older persons and the contributions they render to their communities through volunteer service are as valued as service rendered by the younger population. We were reassured to hear from you that the White House Office of National Service will include senior service programs in the Clinton national service plan, and that there is much support for ACTION's Older American Volunteer Programs in the White House. It is important for you to know that older volunteers across the country feel that they have been overlooked and their contributions minimized because of the intense focus on youth programs. We look forward to greater articulation of the President's support for senior volunteers in public statements and materials from the White House.

Our response to the March 11 Discussion Outline centers on two broad issues, as follows:

1. senior service issues:

- We seek a clear statement from the President regarding his support for the Older American Volunteer Programs -- Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).
- We seek a statement that the Older American Volunteer Programs will be the foundation of the Clinton National Service legislative plan as it relates to senior service.
- We seek funding increases for the Older American Volunteer Programs as part of the Clinton National Service budget request to Congress. It is not enough to say these programs "will be O.K." Recognition by President Clinton of the value of senior volunteer service needs to be underscored with financial resources beyond those that have been available during the Reagan/Bush years.
- We seek ongoing attention to the value of service provided by older persons. While we recognize that there will be a disparity in benefit structures for service programs (largely because of the college loan pay-back initiative), we do not see any justification for disparity in the attention given to service based on the age of those providing it.

2. infrastructure issues:

- We are concerned that the fragmentation of the federal volunteer effort that characterized the Bush Administration (Points of Light Foundation, White House Office of National Service, Commission on National and Community Service,

ACTION) not be continued under the Clinton Administration. This fragmentation creates a hierarchy of programs and sends the message that some are less valued than others. It results in duplication of effort and the waste of valuable financial resources. The major federal service programs should be integrated under one national service agency with strong leadership. The Discussion Outline, by referring to the college loan pay-back initiative as the "centerpiece" program, and by not considering other service programs in this "Clinton National Service Proposal," leaves the impression that other service programs are less valued, may not be integral to the President's overall package, and may be left dangling on the periphery.

- We are concerned about the implication in the Discussion Outline that valuable program funds may be diverted to pay administrative expenses for a state delivery system that might duplicate or replace an existing state system operated by ACTION. The strengths, experience, networks, and cooperative relationships offered by the ACTION state system should be built upon, not duplicated. The existence of two state systems would be expensive and would create barriers to program integration at the community level. The ACTION system offers the capacity to provide technical assistance to community based programs as well as to monitor funding streams and provide for program evaluation. Existing and newly emerging state national service commissions and lead agencies designated by state governors could serve as advisory boards to the state delivery system offered by ACTION, but they should not duplicate that system.
- We are concerned that the state role referred to in the Discussion Outline could lead to the continuation and/or creation of politicized state entities that are uneven in their representation of service programs and their constituencies, and uneven in their support of and advocacy for service program development. For instance, many of our programs have had unsatisfactory relationships with the "lead agencies" that were an outgrowth of the National and Community Service Act. Problems included lack of access, including participation in lead agencies and on advisory panels, and an inability to access funding support.

This year's reauthorization of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act offers opportunities for change and for integration of the Older American Volunteer Programs with other service initiatives under the umbrella of the Clinton National Service Plan. We want to be a part of that change. In recognition of this, the legislative recommendations presented to Congress by our National Association include the following:

- That the references to "Older American Volunteer Programs" in the Domestic Volunteer Service Act be changed to "National Senior Volunteer Corps."
- That ACTION be renamed and restructured so that it becomes the focal point for federally-supported volunteer service initiatives, including new national service initiatives.

We hope you take these recommendations into consideration as you further develop the Clinton National Service Proposal.

Ann Smith, President
National Association of Foster Grandparent Program Directors
7500 Silver Star Road
Orlando, Florida 32818

Phone: (407) 298-4180

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

The Foster Grandparent Program at Sonoma Developmental Center began in 1972. A handful of Sonoma County seniors responded to the call for the fledgling Program. They were a bit wary at first about coming to a large institution to volunteer with developmentally disabled children. After a thorough orientation, they were assigned to two children apiece. Living unit staff provided information about the children and helped the Foster Grandparents get acquainted with them. From this modest beginning, wonderful relationships developed.

Foster Grandparents are men and women, 60 years and older who volunteer four hours a day, five days per week with children with special needs. For their volunteer efforts, they receive a modest tax-free stipend, transportation allowance, a daily meal at the cafeteria and a yearly physical exam. The real reward they will tell you, is to see a mentally handicapped child develop new skills and strengths. Their role is to be a grandparent in every sense - a caring, stable presence in a child's life.

Foster Grandparents develop long term relationships with the individuals they serve. It is common for a ten year veteran of the Program to be serving at least one of their originally assigned clients. If a client is placed in a community home, the Foster Grandparent is involved in the planning process and the transition to the new living environment. They quite often maintain their relationship through visits, phone calls and written correspondence.

Foster Grandparent serve clients in all clinical programs at Sonoma Developmental Center where they work with them in a variety of settings. You see them in and around the client's living units or in classrooms in the school building. You often see them going on leisurely walks about Sonoma's spacious grounds. This increases the client's environmental awareness and gets them into the fresh air. They might be seen at the cafeteria where table manners and other independent living skills are taught. Everywhere they go, Foster Grandparents encourage their charges to make choices. This enables the Foster Grandchild to develop to his or her fullest potential.

Foster Grandparents do what they do best, they provide love and gentle, caring attention to children with special needs. They nurture these youngsters, watch them grow, develop new skills and reach another level of independence. They proudly smile and take well deserved credit for their youngster's development. And they will continue to serve them as long as they can.

ROLE OF FOSTER GRANDPARENTS:APPROPRIATE SERVICES

A Foster Grandparent serves basically as a parent substitute and special friend to her/his assigned children.

Each Foster Grandparent is preferably, but not exclusively, assigned to two children served individually: and usually spends two hours per day, five days per week, with each child. The children served must be under 21 years of age.

Foster Grandparents are not enrolled in the program to give total physical care to the children, to relieve permanent staff members from routine duties, or to work with groups of children as attendants.

Rather, Foster Grandparents are to provide individual attention, unhurried help, companionship, personal care and physical and emotional support and encouragement. Some activities which may be part of this relationship include: playing games, singing, dancing, reading, taking walks, going on field trips and other community excursions, talking, and especially listening.

Grandparents may also provide supplemental training for children within the limits set forth by the volunteer station, such as supporting children in learning situations and therapy, and assisting in social contact and interaction with other children.

Foster Grandparents do not have exclusively defined roles. Much of what they do with their children must be determined by the needs and abilities of the individual child and by the capabilities of the Grandparent. Creative, innovative roles for Grandparents are encouraged.

Intergenerational Program

A unique intergenerational program has been occurring at Sonoma Developmental Center since the Spring of 1992. The Program brings together children that reside on Tallman nursery with older adults that live on Brent Cottage. The children and older clients visit twice a week for about an hour. They have the opportunity to get acquainted, to talk and to observe each other's reactions to the environment on Brent.

Facilitating these twice weekly visits are two Foster Grandparents: Alice Branson and Rose Mc Ardle. They both volunteer on Tallman, being with Sonoma Developmental Center's youngest clients. They ride with teacher Christie De Lucca's class on the school bus to the classroom located near the Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Memorial Grove and Butler Pool complex. After the class is settled into its routine, Alice and Rose each take a child for a leisurely walk over to Brent.

As they enter Brent Cottage, they hear murmurs of approval that the children have arrived for a visit. The elderly residents beam with pride as the children take in the surroundings of their home. Lil Ruso remarks: "how cute they are" as the children are escorted thought the living residence.

The Foster Grandparents take their time, visiting with the clients who are often frail due to their advanced age. The Foster Grandparents encourage the older clients to ask questions about the children. They also try to have the children respond as best they can to the seniors.

Rose Mc Ardle says: " The people on Brent are very nice to Alice and I and the children. They get a real kick out of our visits. They are always happy to see us."

Intergenerational programming is not a new idea. An excellent example is the Foster Grandparent Program, in existence for 27 years nationwide. Developing an intergenerational program with young children and older adults with developmental disabilities is a new twist, however. Leave it to the creative ideas of Foster Grandparents to come up with another way of enhancing the lives of Sonoma Developmental Center's clients.

RECOGNITION DAY 1992

The Foster Grandparent Program and Senior Companion Program celebrated its annual Recognition Day on October 23, 1992. The special day commemorated the 20th Anniversary of the Foster Grandparent Program and the 14th Anniversary of the Senior Companion Programs time at Sonoma Developmental Center. To celebrate this milestone, a special luncheon was held at the Chalais Restaurant at Oakmont. The assembled guests and dignitaries feasted on a delicious lunch and listened to the words of praise for Sonoma's senior volunteers.

A special presentation was made by State Senator Mike Thompson. He presented two Resolutions from the California Legislature. The first one was to the Program in honor of its twenty years of service to Sonoma Developmental Centers disabled children. The second was to Dixie Johnson, a Foster Grandparent who has served all twenty years. Dixie was in the original group that began the program in 1972. She still serves one of her original clients, Steve Jorstead who resides on Regamey - B. Another client she served for 19 years, Claire Staley, passed away last year. Dixie was very proud to receive this special recognition for her twenty years of devoted service.

Special guests at the luncheon were members of the executive staff: Doug Van Meter, Mike Wymore, and Fran Arnold. Representing the Department of Developmental Services Older American Volunteer Program was Pat Kenney.

Receiving plaques for years of service were the following Foster Grandparents: Walt Bundesen, Lillian Burnham, Eva Escobar, Stuart Gregory, John Loveall, Basil Maita and Mort Traub. Serving ten years as Senior Companions were Evelyn Maldonado, and Carmen McCann.

The Recognition Day celebrated another year of dedicated service to Sonoma's disabled clients. This dedication signifies the strong commitment shown by this group of older adults. The average age of the Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions is seventy - five years. Each of them have some sort of medical problem which is not often readily apparent.

They travel for over an hour one way on county transit before arriving at our facility. They receive modest benefits for volunteering but the real reason they continue to volunteer is to be useful. By raising their self esteem, they continue to live longer and provide additional service to Sonoma's clients.

Congratulations on another year of dedicated service.

DIXIE JOHNSON

Dixie Johnson, Foster Grandparent has the distinction of being the oldest FG at Sonoma Developmental Center and the only FG that has served since the Program's inception. This dual characteristic shows that older adults can and do live productive lives after retirement and that they remain contributing members of our society. Dixie may think that her dedication and longevity to this volunteer position is only a simple deed, but to the children she has served over these twenty years, it is a major accomplishment.

Dixie was born on November 14, 1900. She moved from her native Tennessee to the West Coast when she was a youngster. She raised 5 children, has 28 grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great-grandchildren. When her family gets together every year to celebrate her birthday, they have to rent a hall to accommodate all her relatives.

During her tenure as a Foster Grandparent, Dixie has maintained her relationship with the original Foster Grandchildren she was assigned to. She still visits Steven every day on his living unit, taking him for walks around the grounds. She makes sure he is aware of his surroundings, pointing out to him birds flying in the sky, cars driving by, flowers growing in the gardens. When his behavior becomes a bit stubborn, she patiently waits for him to respond appropriately. She has a way of bringing out the best in him.

A year ago, her Foster Grandchild Claire passed away. Dixie attended the Memorial Service that was held for her. There were many photos of Claire on display. Prominently displayed were photos of Dixie and Claire together. The suddenness of her passing left a sadness for many people at SDC. For Dixie, it didn't mean the end of their relationship. It meant that Claire was in a better place now, and that in the not too distant future, they would be together again.

At ninety-one years of age, Dixie is still going strong. She has had medical problems during the past several years that have kept her at home for periods of time. She bounces back from these illnesses, returning to her assignment with the Foster Grandchildren she loves. Knowing that they need her, Dixie doesn't want to disappoint them. Her fortitude is an inspiration to all of us in the Foster Grandparent Program. She is an excellent role model for people of all ages.

Seniors Working With Seniors

1993 celebrates the 15th anniversary of the Senior Companion Program at Sonoma Developmental Center. This program matches adult clients with senior volunteers from the community. The Senior Companions provide attention and love to their assigned clients and assist them in developing their independence.

A special aspect of the Senior Companion Program is the involvement with the newly created Senior Center on Hatch. This warm attractively decorated Center is just down the hallway from the Senior Companion office. When several Senior Companions arrive each day, they sign in, walk thirty paces and arrive at their volunteer site. Then their involvement begins anew each day.

Wanda Greenwood, a 2 year member of the Program has been a valuable helper in assisting clients with a variety of activities. She was especially helpful in assisting clients with Christmas crafts. These delicate potpourri items were a big seller at the Christmas Crafts Faire.

Another Senior Companion that frequents the Senior Center is Evert Ryn. He is a 15 year veteran of the Program and knows all of the clients at the Senior Center. He visits with them, plays checkers and reads articles from the daily newspaper. He is quite fond of Harry and David, two longtime chums that live on Brent. They can often be heard discussing their favorite football team, the San Francisco Forty Niners.

He is also fond of the Senior Center's Director, Leona Shipley, R.N. Their friendship goes back to Wagner Cottage in the late 70's when she was the unit manager and he a newly arrived Senior Companion.

Other Senior Companions that have visited and volunteered at the Senior Center are George Callan, Lina Kiniery, Anke Boss, Clyde Davenport and Evelyn Maldonado. These seniors enjoy working with seniors and help keep the Senior Center an active place.

FOSTER GRANDPARENT/SENIOR COMPANION CHORUS
CAROLING AT SONOMA DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

Singing carols such as Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer, White Christmas, Joy to the World, the FG/SC Chorus entertained Sonoma Developmental Center's clients during the holiday season. Starting the first week of December, the chorus tried their best to put everyone into a festive spirit. Led by Tony Zuber, Senior Companion, the intrepid carolers sang on twenty four living units. Tony's creative direction inspired the group to perform to top capacity. This in turn inspired staff and clients who sang along, making it a merry time for all.

A featured part of the performance was duet sung by Norma Lou Peeples, Foster Grandparent and Cesar Esquieres, Senior Companion. As they sang Silent Night, each unit would be still, with only their voices to be heard. Their voices had a profound effect on all that heard them. Many staff complimented them on their lovely singing.

As they left each unit, the group sang We Wish You a Merry Christmas. This was their wish to Sonoma Developmental Center's clients and hard working staff. A wish for a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Yew.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Hickey. You know, while you were testifying and when Ms. Mangen was testifying and talking about linkages between programs, I can't help but get ideas and one of them is that the Foster Grandparent is a national program to be linked to latchkey. Because in a way, in Ms. Mangen's program they are doing that. And when they bring those young people in to spend time at the recreation center where they get tutored, now that's a useful time, but it still is giving those young people some place to stay because latchkey over the years has been in trouble funding wise, too. And there are some school districts that have cut out their latchkey program which I think is a terrible shame. That is a great idea.

Ms. Aldrin.

Ms. ALDRIN. Chairman Martinez, Congresswoman Woolsey, and all the people back there, can you hear me?

Chairman MARTINEZ. Yes.

Ms. ALDRIN. My name is Joan Aldrin, and I am Director of the Senior Companion Program in Los Angeles. This program came into being in June of 1974 as a result of passage of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act. It's administered by ACTION, the Federal volunteer agency. The program was in place in Los Angeles by the summer of 1976 and the Volunteer Center of LA was awarded the sponsorship contract in April of 1984.

This program, as you said Chairman Martinez, was designed for low-income senior citizens age 60 and older. They provide a meaningful service to their peers by offering supportive person-to-person services primarily to shut-ins and those who are isolated or disabled.

At this time they're receiving a small stipend and travel reimbursement. It doesn't mess up their social security.

Our companions perform such tasks as accompanying a client to the doctor, encouraging the client to exercise by taking them out for a walk, they may prepare light meals and snacks and even do some grocery shopping and run some errands, but perhaps the most important thing of all is that they act as a friend. They come in as a friend to visit to—well, play games or cards or maybe just take the client to a nearby park to listen to the birds sing. Their main goal is to delay institutionalization as long as possible.

The objectives of the senior companion program, in addition to this, is to offer respite care to those caregivers who need some time off just to rest, recharge their batteries. I'm sure that you all know of someone who has been in that position. A companion can also act as a transition person for a client who has just been discharged from the hospital and needs a little help, a little comfort until the client can resume independent living. And lastly an important duty is to assist with the terminally ill.

Presently we have 64 Senior Companions who are serving 185 clients in the greater Los Angeles area. Robert Brown who is here with me today to testify has a client who is blind. Bill Riley plays alto saxophone in a band at a local Senior Center. Bobby plays tenor, alto sax and flute in the same band.

We like to think that this is a senior helping senior program, but sometimes the tables are turned. One day last year a senior companion had a mild coronary incident while she was out shopping

with her client. The client who was a lady in her eighties managed to get the companion into the companion's car, drove her to her home, called the paramedics who arrived promptly and took care of everything. So you see, it is a senior helping senior program. And by the way, that companion was back on the job on Monday morning. So I believe that that is a first in the annals of LA Senior Companion Program.

Our roster also reflects the varied ethnicity of the City of Los Angeles. Now, others have touched on this. For me this is a daily situation. I don't want to say it's a problem, but it is. It's just a daily situation, 32 percent of our roster are—they are Filipinos, their first language is Tagalog. We have had quite an influx of Filipinos in the last year. It used to be more Hispanics. Now, at the moment, we really have less than 1 percent of Hispanics, but we don't have a site in East Los Angeles and I wonder if that probably is the reason.

However, the Hispanics and the Filipinos that we have, their English is not good. So I do have a station manager who is bilingual in Spanish and English at one of our sites and most of the senior companions who are Hispanics are stationed there and so I do rely heavily on him as an interpreter. But surely it seems to me that we could have some sort of a program or some development of materials that would aid and help those where English is not their first language.

And because our funds are limited our boundaries go no farther east than downtown LA. And there is an area here east of downtown LA which includes Alhambra, Monterey Park, San Gabriel which is not served by the Senior Companion program. Now, this area extends eastward to Walnut where our Pomona branch then takes over. But within that pocket I have received many inquiries for services from our program and there's nothing that I can do except to refer them to their local senior center and most of them do not have a program that is even comparable to ours. So you see, there is a real need for our services. But because of limited funds we cannot branch out any farther.

It's widely known that today over 80 percent of older Americans are in excellent health, extremely active in the community and are a viable force in the field of volunteerism. They are not ready to fold up their tents and steal away, nor are they ready to be put on an ice floe and sent down the Bering Straits. They are eager to serve and being low-income, of course, they find the stipend very attractive. I hope that they and the OAVP can continue to be an active and contributing force and not be overlooked in President Clinton's national service initiative.

[The prepared statement of Joan Aldrin follows:]

STATEMENT OF JOAN ALDRIN, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

My name is Joan Aldrin, and I am Director of the Senior Companion Program. The program is funded through the Domestic Volunteer Service Act and administered by ACTION, the Federal volunteer agency.

The Senior Companion Program came into being in June, 1974. In July, 1976 the program was awarded to the City of Los Angeles and administered by the Department of Parks and Recreation until March 31, 1982. After some brief temporary sponsorship by other organizations, the Volunteer Center of Los Angeles was given the contract effective April, 1984.

This program provides volunteer opportunities for low-income seniors age 60 years and older. Through this program our seniors remain actively involved in their communities and they provide a meaningful service to their peers by providing supportive person-to-person services to primarily shut-ins and isolated senior citizens.

At this time they are receiving a small stipend of \$2.45/hour and transportation reimbursement if they drive of \$.26/mile for miles traveled to and from work. Seniors who do not drive receive the cost of a monthly bus pass.

Our program is designed to offer valuable services to those of their peers who suffer from chronic illnesses and/or disabilities. In many cases, if it weren't for our Companions, a senior citizen might be institutionalized. One of the Program's primary purposes for being in existence is to delay that happening for as long as possible.

Our Companions perform such tasks as assisting with eating, dressing and walking, being present while the client is bathing to watch out in case the client falls, taking the client to the doctor and encouraging the client to exercise. They prepare light meals and snacks, do light grocery shopping, run errands, write letters, help with bookkeeping and filling out forms (many of our clients are blind) and read aloud to them. Perhaps most important of all they provide companionship, by visiting, playing games or cards or maybe just taking the client to a nearby park to listen to the birds sing. The availability of this program may help clients maintain independent living within their own home or apartment for an indefinite period.

The objectives of the Senior Companion Program, in addition to delaying institutionalization, is to offer respite care to the primary caregivers who need some time off to rest and recharge batteries. I'm sure that you all know of someone who has been in that position. A companion can act as a "transition" person to a client just discharged from the hospital—giving aid and comfort until the client can resume independent living, and, lastly, assist with the terminally ill.

Presently we have 64 Senior Companions who are serving 185 clients in the greater Los Angeles area. Robert Brown who is here with me today to testify has a client who is blind. Bill Riley plays alto saxophone in a band at a local Senior Center. Bobby plays tenor, alto sax and flute in the same band.

We like to think that this is a Senior helping Senior Program. Sometimes the tables are turned. One day last year a Senior Companion had a mild coronary incident while shopping with her client. The client managed to get her Companion into the Companion's car and drove her home and called the paramedics who arrived promptly and took over. Our Senior Companion was back on the job Monday morning. I believe that is a first in the annals of the LA Senior Companion Program.

Some of our Senior Companions have learned through lectures, on-the-job training and perhaps through a natural inborn wisdom how best to care for a victim of Alzheimer's, an insidious and unrelenting disease. Some of these patients are still able to live independently at home for a longer time because of the care and concern of our Companions.

The services of a Senior Companion working 20 hours a week cost less than \$3,000 a year. Nursing homes charge at least \$30,000 annually.

Our roster reflects the varied ethnicity of the City of Los Angeles. Thirty-two percent of our people have Tagalog as their first language. Surprisingly, at the moment we have only six Hispanic members, but their English is, with one or two exceptions, very poor. All but one of these people work out of St. Barnabas Senior Center. For the most part I must rely on my bilingual station manager at St. Barnabas to act as interpreter. Surely we could have some sort of program or develop some materials that would help those whose first language is not English.

Because our funds are limited, our boundaries go no farther east than downtown LA. There is an area east of there which includes Alhambra, Monterey Park, San Gabriel which is not served by our program. This area extends eastward to Walnut where the Pomona branch of the program takes over. I have received inquiries from needy people in this area and expect to receive more. There is a real need for our services, but because of limited funds we cannot branch out any farther.

It is widely known that today over 80 percent of older Americans are in excellent health, extremely active in the community, and are a viable force in the field of volunteerism. They are not ready to fold up their tents and steal away. Nor are they ready to be put on an ice floe and sent down the Bering Straits. They are eager to serve, and being low-income they find the stipend very attractive. I hope they and the OAVP can continue to be an active and contributing force, and not be overlooked in President Clinton's national service initiative.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Aldrin. You bring to my attention or to our attention something that I didn't know that the

senior companion service was not provided out in this area. We are served by another two programs, but evidently that one doesn't have any agency out here in this area that's doing it.

Ms. ALDRIN. That's right.

Chairman MARTINEZ. And I'm surprised by that because ratio wise, Alhambra and Monterey Park and even San Gabriel have the highest ratio of seniors of any other communities in LA County.

Ms. ALDRIN. Now, I didn't know that.

Chairman MARTINEZ. And there is really a lack of service where it's needed. And I have to look into that. Thank you for bringing that to my attention.

Mr. Brown? I want to know about your band.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Chairman and Congressperson, several months ago I was seeking employment for myself being a senior person. I made inquiry at the George and Helen Thomas Senior Center in Los Angeles, where a senior employment agency was located. A member citizen of the Thomas Center suggested that I could become a Senior Companion. I was prompted to seek more information about the Senior Companion Program. I became very interested.

My thoughts about the Senior Companion Program are to accept the responsibilities and fulfill the obligations of my position as a Senior Companion, to conduct myself with honesty and integrity and to adhere to the highest moral principles in the performance of my duties.

My contribution to the Senior Companion Program is to strive continually to improve my performance by seeking training and educational opportunities that will better prepare me for my position as a Senior Companion.

In regard to client relationship, I think it is important to have compassion, to be kind and caring, to observe the precepts of accuracy and prudence without allowing personal feelings, prejudice, animosities or friendships to influence my judgment, and to respect and protect the client at all times.

In closing, my attitude is to conduct myself professionally, and to perform my duties in a manner that reflect credit upon myself, my director, and the Senior Companion Program. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Robert Brown follows:]

STATEMENT OF ROBERT BROWN

Several months ago, I was seeking employment for myself. I made inquiry at the George and Helen Thomas Senior Center in Los Angeles, where a senior employment agency is located. A member citizen of the Thomas Center suggested that I could become a Senior Companion. I was prompted to seek more information about the Senior Companion Program.

My thoughts about the Senior Companion Program are to accept the responsibilities and fulfill the obligations of my position as a Senior Companion, to conduct myself with honesty and integrity and to adhere to the highest moral principles in the performance of my duties.

My contribution to the Senior Companion Program is to strive continually to improve my performance by seeking training and educational opportunities that will better prepare me for my position as a Senior Companion.

In regard to client relationship, I think it is important to have compassion, to be kind and caring, to observe the precepts of accuracy and prudence without allowing

personal feelings, prejudice, animosities or friendships to influence my judgment, and to respect and protect the client at all times.

In closing—my attitude is to conduct myself professionally, and to perform my duties in a manner that reflects credit upon myself, my director, and the Senior Companion Program.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Brown. At this time I'm going to turn to Ms. Woolsey first.

Ms. WOOLSEY. How nice of you.

[Laughter.]

Chairman MARTINEZ. Well, most chairmen always do it first.

Ms. WOOLSEY. I've noticed that.

Chairman MARTINEZ. And I figure we're equal compatriots here.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Oh, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, Mr. Brown, you are an example then of the question I asked earlier. What is the employment program that was referred to, so you went for counseling and through that you found employment not outside of the agency, but part of it?

Mr. BROWN. Well, I consider it volunteerism. It's not like employment, even though there are some stipends involved. I became interested because I realized that there was a need for persons like myself to assist people who could not function as well as I feel that I can. And so I became very interested in the program so as I go day by day I educate myself more so that I can really perform my duties in such fashion that it would be a benefit to myself and my client.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, congratulations. I think you set quite a good example for everybody involved.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you.

Ms. WOOLSEY. The three of you, starting with you, Mr. Hickey, the same question, but I think you might know better than others because you have Marin County just south of you—and your agency doesn't go into Marin.

Mr. HICKEY. That's correct.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Can you see differences and gaps in the program from the more rural areas as opposed to the urban centers? Are there pockets? I mean, we just found one. Our Chairman's very own city doesn't have one of the programs. I think they will in the future. I can see it coming.

[Laughter.]

Ms. WOOLSEY. But, I mean, are there rural/urban tugs here that you have to put up with?

Mr. HICKEY. We have concerns that are specific to us as a rural county. One is the distance for the volunteers to travel from their home to our volunteer site, the center. The majority of my volunteers come on Sonoma County transit and for them it's an hour one way on the bus in the morning to get to our facility. That's either from Santa Rosa or Rohnert Park, or Petaluma. For those that live in Sonoma Valley, of course, it's a little bit closer, so transportation is always an issue for us as a rural county.

There are other locations throughout the county that I know would benefit from having foster grandparents there, but because our sponsor is the Department of Developmental Services our focus is on the children at our developmental center. We do have some foster grandparents serving our clients in community schools and

special education classes in Petaluma the two high schools there and at the high school in Sonoma Valley. I've had requests from teachers in Santa Rosa and Cotati to have foster grandparents involved in their classrooms with their special education students, too.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, I can see that that would be a challenge in our district to get around, not only to your facility and back out to the community, to the schools, et cetera.

Would either one of you want to comment on the rural/urban issue and the gaps that we have?

Ms. ALDRIN. Since we're in the greater Los Angeles Area, I don't have any rural gaps at all.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Right. You don't have a lot of open space, do you?

Chairman MARTINEZ. But obviously we have an urban gap because there's services of one of the programs not provided there.

Ms. ALDRIN. Right. Right.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you very much.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey.

A little bit more on what Ms. Woolsey was talking about, because you know, that is a problem in rural areas. The idea that everything is so far from everything. Do you have any suggestions how we could help in some way in understanding that there always is the shortage of funding, but still there's a job that needs to be done and somehow we ought to be able to find the funding for it. Have you thought about how you facilitate covering these distances better than you can right now? Is there something you have in mind?

Mr. HICKEY. Well, I have tried in the past to have more of my foster grandparents go to community sites just as programs here and probably in the greater Los Angeles area. Their volunteers don't go to one site like they do at my facility. They go to a variety of sites throughout the county that's why I have tried to place my volunteers in special education classrooms serving our clients from our facility, but then there are clients that live with their parents or students, I should say, with special needs and they can use the services, too. So I would think maybe programs of national significance using those moneys would help expand a program such as mine so that we could have a greater impact on children with special needs in our particular area.

Chairman MARTINEZ. All right. That's a good suggestion.

Let me ask you, Mr. Hickey, because we were talking a little bit earlier about the national linkage with latchkey which I think is a very good one. Somehow we ought to find some mechanism in which we encourage more of that or provide incentives for the programs to do that. I'd like to ask, you know, right now, how do the Older American Volunteers Programs interact with other types of volunteer program services or do they?

Mr. HICKEY. Well, in Sonoma County they interact on a regular basis with the volunteer center of Sonoma County which sponsors for one thing an RSVP program. They have regularly scheduled meetings where we get together with volunteer directors from different agencies so we can share stories, concerns, ask for assistance or help, so there's an informal type of linkage that way. Currently

it doesn't seem to be a formal linkage between volunteer programs as you're suggesting.

Chairman MARTINEZ. So the initiative has to be the individuals' initiative?

Mr. HICKEY. Yes, that's correct.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Let me ask you this, there is one particular program I had in mind specifically. Over the past few years there has been a development of Youth Corps around the country, both urban and rural, in which they provide the opportunity for young people who—a lot of them are at risk, dropouts, et cetera, to get involved in community service. They fix up poor people's homes and things like this and get involved in projects like that and there's a lot of need for some training for these young people. Older retired people who have the expertise let's say in carpentry or plumbing, or electricity, or painting, or whatever it can show these young people how to use a saw, how to use a hammer, et cetera. That would be a great, I would think, linkage between the foster grandparents and that program. Do you know of any instance where that might be happening?

Mr. HICKEY. Yes, I do. I've had the opportunity to visit the foster grandparent program in Reno, Nevada and I toured their volunteer site at the Job Corps or Youth Corps, whatever the correct title is and there were foster grandparents placed there working with the youths there. They were working on tutoring them in English and math. And then there was one woman, she was teaching the young adolescents there some crocheting and knitting skills. So it indeed has success behind it and it could probably be expanded to teach the skills that you're talking about such as plumbing, electrical and carpentry, too.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I'll have to visit that site in Reno and get more information on it because I think that's a natural. Here again, has been an individual initiative there in Reno; right?

Mr. HICKEY. Yes. I'm not sure if it's solely in Reno or other places across the country.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I have not—As the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Employment Services which I gave up for this chairmanship, I had visited a lot of those sites and I didn't see it in those sites that I visited. So it might be just a local initiative, but I think it's something that should be developed as a model for the whole program.

Mr. HICKEY. I agree.

Chairman MARTINEZ. So I thank you very much for that information.

Ms. Aldrin, it sounds like you're doing a really great job with your Senior Companion Program in Los Angeles, but you brought up something that kind of almost shocked me, you know, that we are not providing that service out here. Can you explain to me why or what seems to be—

Ms. ALDRIN. No, I really can't. I've only been with the program 10 months and we are, you know—as you know, we are funded for really only 50—well, effective the first of this month only 51 senior companions. So we are quite strapped. I'm afraid we will be looking ahead.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Is the question that you could provide the service if you had more slots? Or could you extend the——

Ms. ALDRIN. Well, I can't really take on any more senior companions because I can't pay them.

Chairman MARTINEZ. No, that's what I mean, though.

Ms. ALDRIN. Yes, right.

Chairman MARTINEZ. If you had the money for the slots, for the stipends, could you expand to this area?

Ms. ALDRIN. If I had——

Chairman MARTINEZ. Or are you bound——

Ms. ALDRIN. Yes, I could. I've already opened up one new one in the 10 months that I've been in the program—over on the west side of town, so I expanded that to our westernmost limits and I'm already at the easternmost limits and I could go further if I had the funds.

Chairman MARTINEZ. All right. I might have Les get together with you on how you're applying for the funds and your applications and then go back to the department and see if there isn't some way we can get more funds because there really is a great need out here, I guarantee you that.

Ms. ALDRIN. There must be just from the few phone calls that I get, you know, that they even find me, I'm surprised because I'm in Hollywood.

Chairman MARTINEZ. All right. We'll see what we can do.

Thank you very much for sharing that with us and bringing that to our attention. I want to thank this panel also. You've been a great help to us and as we move forward towards reauthorization we will keep our communications open and maybe seek more input from you through the mail.

Thank you, again.

Mr. HICKEY. Thank you.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Our next panel consists of Ms. Pam Robinson who is a project director of the Foster Grandparent Program at the Fred C. Nelles School, California Youth Authority, Whittier, California and Ms. Manuela Ortiz, Volunteer of the Foster Grandparent Program at that same location and Mr. Louis Fontenot. Did I get that right, Louis?

Mr. FONTENOT. Yes, Fontenot.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Fontenot. I remember that, French so you don't pronounce the last letter. Mr. Fontenot is the project director from the Volunteer Action Center of Los Angeles, Foster Grandparent Program of Los Angeles California and Ms. Vera Wright, Volunteer, from the Volunteer Action Center of Los Angeles and she is a Foster Grandparent in the Foster Grandparent Program at Los Angeles, California.

Welcome and thank you for visiting with us today and sharing your testimony with us. And with that we'll start with Ms. Robinson.

STATEMENTS OF PAMELA ROBINSON, PROJECT DIRECTOR, FOSTER GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM, FRED C. NELLES SCHOOL, CALIFORNIA YOUTH AUTHORITY, WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA; MANUELA ORTIZ, VOLUNTEER, FOSTER GRANDPARENTS PROGRAM, FRED C. NELLES SCHOOL, CALIFORNIA YOUTH AUTHORITY, WHITTIER, CALIFORNIA; LOUIS G. FONTENOT, PROJECT DIRECTOR, VOLUNTEER ACTION CENTER OF LOS ANGELES, FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA; AND MS. VERA WRIGHT, VOLUNTEER, VOLUNTEER ACTION CENTER OF LOS ANGELES, FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Ms. ROBINSON. Thank you, Chairman Martinez.

My name is Pamela Robinson, and I am a project Director for the Foster Grandparent Program located at Fred C. Nelles School in Whittier, California. Our sponsor is the California Youth Authority, a State agency with the purpose of treating and rehabilitating youthful law offenders.

Fred C. Nelles School is one of 11 institutions run by the department, and for an overview of the department's infrastructure, I have enclosed an attachment in your packet that has statistics regarding the entire setup of the youth authority and that type of nature.

Fred C. Nelles School is responsible for the treatment and rehabilitation of approximately 801 youthful offenders. These young men are committed by juvenile courts in over 11 counties with a few commitments from Superior and U.S. District Courts. Their ages range from 13 years to 20 years of age. However, because of certain problems or situations, there are some who are there over the age of 20, and a summary with statistics on the makeup of our clientele has been included, please refer to Attachment B in your packet.

The mission of the Youth Authority is to protect the public from the consequences of criminal activity. In order to enhance the ability to accomplish this mission, there are a shared set of values that are reflected in the department's operations. One very important value is citizen participation. The Foster Grandparent Program here at Nelles is comprised of 60 senior citizens who, in the form of being tutors and surrogate parents help the department accomplish their mission.

As a part of their treatment and education, the Foster Grandparents make a difference in these young men's lives. Many of these young men have a long history of family turmoil, violence, rejection, and we can probably think of a number of things that they have been subjected to and involved in up to the point where they have been incarcerated there. A background profile of first commitments has been included in your packet, and that is Attachment C, if you would like to refer to that. It goes into more statistical information as to background, and some of the things that are relevant to their problems prior to coming to the Youth Authority.

The wards view the Foster Grandparents as a contrast to what they often feel is an otherwise frustrating environment. Today's at-risk youth need the genuine kindness and unconditional love that the Foster Grandparents provide. Support of the Older American

Volunteers Programs and the ACTION Agency is critical for the continuation of valuable programs such as this one.

We would like to see ACTION remain as an overseer and focal point of nationally federally supported programs such as the Foster Grandparent Program. We would also like to see the Clinton administration include the new National Service Initiatives into the OAVP infrastructure.

Since I began with the program, both ACTION's regional and State offices have played an active role in assisting our sponsor by providing technical assistance through annual conferences, site visits, and special workshops. As the new Project Director, I have called upon the assistance of my State program specialist to provide material to promote our program in the community, to speak at our advisory counsel meetings, and attend our recognition programs. ACTION has been very visible, and has a close working relationship with the California Youth Authority.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Pamela Robinson follows:]

STATEMENT OF PAMELA ROBINSON, PROJECT DIRECTOR,

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

My name is Pamela Robinson, Project Director for the Foster Grandparent Program located at Fred C. Nelles School, Whittier, California. Our sponsor is the California Youth Authority, a State agency, with the purpose of treating and rehabilitating youthful law offenders. Fred C. Nelles School is one of 11 institutions run by the Department. For an overview of the department's infrastructure please refer to attachment [A] in your packet.

Fred C. Nelles School is responsible for the treatment and rehabilitation of approximately 801 youthful offenders. These young men are committed by Juvenile Courts in over 11 counties, with a few commitments from Superior and U.S. District Courts. Their ages range from 13 years to 20 years of age. However, because of certain problems or situations, there are some over the age of 20. A summary with statistics on the makeup of our clientele has been included, please refer to attachment [B].

The mission of the Youth Authority is to protect the public from the consequences of criminal activity. In order to enhance the ability to accomplish this mission there are a shared set of values that are reflected in the Department's operations. One very important value is "Citizen Participation." The Foster Grandparent Program here at Nelles, is comprised of 60 Senior citizens who, in the form of being tutors and surrogate parents, help the Department accomplish their mission. As a part of their treatment and education, the Foster Grandparents make a difference in these young men's lives. Many of these young men have a long history of family turmoil, violence, and rejection. A Background Profile of First Commitments has been included in your packet, please refer to attachment [C]. The wards view the Foster Grandparents as a contrast to what they often feel is an otherwise frustrating environment. Today's "at-risk youth" need the genuine kindness and unconditional love that the Foster Grandparents provide.

Support of Older American Volunteers Programs and the ACTION agency is critical for the continuation of valuable programs such as this one.

We would like to see ACTION remain as the overseer and focal point of national federally supported programs, such as the Foster Grandparent Program. We also would like to see the Clinton administration include the new National Service Initiatives into the OAVP infrastructure. Since I began with the program, both ACTION's regional and State offices have played an active role in assisting our sponsor by providing technical assistance through; Annual Conferences, site visits, and special workshops. As the new Project Director, I have called upon the assistance of my State Program Specialist to provide materials to promote our program in the community, speak at our Advisory Counsel meetings, attend our recognition programs. ACTION has been very visible and has a close working relationship with the California Youth Authority.

Attachment (A)

EXECUTIVE FACT CARD

CYA OPERATES: 11 institutions, 4 camps, 20 parole offices, 2 parole residential drug treatment programs (north and south).

FISCAL: \$350 m FY 1991-92; 5,033 employees, \$31,373 annual cost to house a ward.

POPULATION: 8,340 ----Increase in one year: 1.8%

Institutions 7,985, Capacity 6,372, Occupied 125.3%;

Camps 355, Capacity 320, Occupied 110.9%

Combined Inst. & camps 8,340, Capacity 6,692, Occupied 124.6%;

Parolees 5,817 -----Decrease in one year 3.8%

WARDS: 17.9% White, 38% Hispanic, 37.3% Black, 6.8% Other;

Average length of stay 22.0 months;

Average age 19.0;

Education: 5,542 in high school, 191 in college;

Employed: 363 in camps, 1,620 in public service programs, 117 in Free Venture jobs, 42 on furlough

Attachment (B)

Fred C. Nelles School
Daily Summary
Friday, April 2, 1993

INSTITUTIONAL COUNT

Total Ward Count - 801

CITIZENSHIP

US	619
Mexico	108
Other	50
NIF	23

ETHNIC BREAKDOWN

Hispanic	437	55%
Black	279	34%
White	48	6%
Asian	23	3%
Other	13	2%
NIF	1	0%

GANGS

Asian	8
Bay Area	0
Blood	50
Crip	157
Norte	6
Sur	336
Other	37
None	71
NIF	136

VIOLENCE LEVELS

HIGH	663
MEDUIM	23
LOW	5
NIF	110

COMITTING COURT

Juvenile	793
Superior	4
US District	2
NIF	2

*NIF = Not in file.

Profiles of First Commitments

California Youth Authority Males:

HOME ENVIRONMENT:

- Fifty percent came from neighborhoods considered below average economically, 44 percent came from average neighborhoods and six percent were from above average neighborhoods.
- Forty percent lived in neighborhoods with a high level of delinquency, and 34 percent lived in moderately delinquent neighborhoods. Only seven percent were from neighborhoods considered nondelinquent.
- Thirty-two percent came from homes where public assistance funds comprised all or most of the family income.

FAMILY:

- Seventy-two percent came from broken homes. However, at least one natural parent was present in 92 percent of the homes.
- Fifty-two percent had at least one parent, brother, or sister with a delinquent or criminal record.
- Less than one percent were married at the time of commitment and five percent had children.

DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR:

- Eighty-six percent had at least one conviction or sustained petition prior to commitment to the Youth Authority, while 23 percent had five or more convictions or sustained petitions prior to commitment. Sixty-eight percent had a previous commitment to a local facility.

EMPLOYMENT/SCHOOLING:

- Of those in the labor force, only seven percent were employed full time while 73 percent were unemployed.
- Fifty-five percent were last enrolled in the tenth grade or below. Thirteen percent had reached the 12th grade or had graduated from high school at the time of commitment.

California Youth Authority Females:

HOME ENVIRONMENT:

- Forty percent came from neighborhoods considered below average economically, 49 percent came from average neighborhoods and eleven percent were from above average neighborhoods.
- Thirty-four percent lived in neighborhoods with a high level of delinquency, and 30 percent lived in moderately delinquent neighborhoods. Only eight percent were from neighborhoods considered nondelinquent.
- Thirty-six percent came from homes where public assistance funds comprised all or most of the family income.

FAMILY:

- Seventy-five percent came from broken homes. However, at least one natural parent was present in 88 percent of the homes.
- Fifty-seven percent had at least one parent, brother, or sister with a delinquent or criminal record.
- Less than one percent were married at the time of commitment and 18 percent had children.

DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR:

- Eighty-two percent had at least one conviction or sustained petition prior to commitment to the Youth Authority while 15 percent had five or more convictions or sustained petitions prior to commitment. Forty-two percent had a previous commitment to a local facility.

EMPLOYMENT/SCHOOLING:

- Of those in the labor force, 82 percent were unemployed and three percent were employed full time.
- Sixty-six percent were last enrolled in the tenth grade or below. Ten percent had reached the 12th grade or had graduated from high school at the time of commitment.

¹ Does not include CDC cases committed under Welfare and Institutions Code Section 1731.5(e).

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Robinson.

Ms. Ortiz.

Ms. ORTIZ. Good morning. My name is Manuela Ortiz, Foster Grandparent Field Supervisor at Fred C. Nelles School.

After my husband died in 1973, I did every kind of work I was able to do as I had never worked before. A neighbor told me about Fred C. Nelles and the youth incarcerated there. She told me they needed help. Having no idea what kind of young people I was about to encounter there, I accepted. I have raised five children, all married with children of their own, I have 27 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren with one on the way.

I started working for the program as a volunteer in June 1976 and was later selected to be field supervisor. In all my years as a volunteer and field supervisor, I have done my best to help my directors improve the program, knowing, at the same time, it would help the program as a whole. In the beginning it was very hard for me to see so many young men that had committed such violent crimes. However, I soon realized I was not there to judge or criticize, but only to show compassion and do my very best to try and help them improve their lives.

These wards open to the foster grandparents very freely. Although they do lie a lot, we have lived long enough, and God has given us the grace to tell the difference. Some of these wards get very attached to the foster grandparents. They seem to be so hungry to be loved. We recently had a grandparent pass, and many of the wards used money off their books to send cards. Those who didn't have the resources made the most beautiful cards to send to the family.

On the living units, the wards usually never fight when the grandparents are there, and there has never been a riot on the unit when a grandparent is present. We are well respected, and the ones that have been disrespectful towards the grandparents can be counted on one hand. If they are involved in a conversation and using disrespectful language, they immediately apologize to the grandparent and stop.

Our program has many festivities that include the wards, and they behave beautifully. I have seen our tutors work to help wards with their school work, and grandparents on the units counsel wards. It is a wonderful feeling to know that we are helping our future generation.

My belief is that if out of the 60 grandparents at Nelles we help one each during our careers, we have done a great job. Myself, I have helped one young man that now is married and has a family. He is doing very well. With my help, he understood how unique he really is, and now he is able to do many great things. We keep in touch, and he calls me every year on Mother's Day and Christmas.

It is my hope that support and funding for the Foster Grandparent Program continues. The money the grandparents receive is good, but the satisfaction we get from loving these young men means the world to us.

[The prepared statement of Manuela Ortiz follows:]

STATEMENT OF MANUELA ORTIZ, FOSTER GRANDPARENT FIELD SUPERVISOR

My name is Manuela Ortiz, Foster Grandparent Field Supervisor, at Fred C. Nelles School. After my husband died in 1973, I did every kind of work I was able to do, as I had never worked before. A neighbor told me about Fred C. Nelles and the youth incarcerated there. She told me they needed help. Having no idea what kind of young people I was about to encounter there, I accepted. I have raised five children, all married with children of their own. I have 27 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren, with one on the way.

I started working for the program as a volunteer in June 1976, and was later selected to be Field Supervisor. In all my years as a volunteer and Field Supervisor, I have done my best to help my directors improve the program, knowing at the same time it will help the program as a whole. In the beginning it was very hard for me to see so many young men that had committed such violent crimes. However, I soon realized I was not there to judge or criticize, but only to show compassion and do my very best to try and help them improve their lives.

These wards open to the foster grandparents very freely. Although they do lie a lot, we have lived long enough and God has given us the grace to tell the difference! Some of these wards get very attached to the foster grandparents. They seem to be so hungry to be loved. We recently had a grandparent pass and many of the wards used money off their books to send cards. Those who didn't have any resources made the most beautiful cards to send to the family.

On the living units the wards usually never fight when the grandparents are there and there has never been a riot on the unit when a grandparent is present. We are well respected and the ones that have been disrespectful towards the grandparents can be counted on one's hand. If they are involved in a conversation and using disrespectful language, they immediately apologize to the grandparent and stop.

Our program has many festivities that include the wards and they behave beautifully. I have seen our tutors work to help wards with their school work and grandparents on the units counsel wards. It's a wonderful feeling to know we are helping our future generation. My belief is that if out of the 60 foster grandparents at Nelles, we help one each during our careers here we have done a great job. Myself, I have helped one young man that now is married and has a family. He is doing very well. With my help he understood how unique he really is and now he is able to do many great things. We keep in touch and he calls me every year on Mother's Day and Christmas.

It is my hope that support and funding for the foster grandparent programs continues. The money the grandparents receive is good, but the satisfaction we get from loving these young men means the world to us.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you.

I want to tell you, I am really taken back by that testimony, something you said there, and I really want to share this with you because you seem to have captured the essence of what Father Val Peters at Boys Town has captured in his interviewing young people that come to Boys Town, and understand Boys Town is no longer just boys town, it is boys and girls town.

I was there visiting in one of the homes one weekend to see what their program does for the young people. I was surprised to find out that a lot of these people in Boys Town actually come from violent areas like Chicago and Los Angeles, from violent gangs like Bloods and Crips, et cetera, and there are some that end up there just because they seek Boys Town out.

I was there one weekend and I went to Sunday Mass, at Sunday Mass, Father Val Peters was talking in the sermon about an arrival, a late night arrival just the night before or just that morning actually, and he said to the young person, because the person had come a long, long way, a very long way, and he said, "My God, child, what brings you all this way here to our Boys Town?"

The young person said, "Father, I just ran out of somebody to love me, and I am looking for somebody to love me."

It seems like that is something you have discovered here when you say that they are hungry for love, and I think if all of us look back to some of our earlier experiences, even with our own children, a lot of times when they get into problems and cause us great concern, it is because they are wanting us to acknowledge that we love them, and somehow, sometimes, we fail to do that, and that is how some of these young people end up where they do.

So I want to commend you. I think the young people there are very fortunate to have encountered somebody like yourself and those other people that are working there, so I just want to take this minute to commend you before we go on to our next witness.

Mr. Fontenot, Louis, you have the mike.

Mr. FONTENOT. Good morning, Chairman Martinez, Congresswoman Woolsey. Thank you for taking the time to listen to all of the testimonies from people who represent and support the Older American Volunteers Programs.

We all feel it is our responsibility to proclaim the wonderful and important contributions that senior citizens bring to our youth, to our communities, and to our Nation. My name is Louis Fontenot, and I am the Director of the Foster Grandparent Program sponsored by the Volunteer Center of Los Angeles. My participation at this hearing is mainly to impress upon you some important issues and concerns that I believe are worthwhile. My hopes are that the OAVP programs be reauthorized and included in the Clinton National Service Legislation Plan, but even more so that one of America's most precious resources be embraced by our new administration.

This concept most commonly phrased is bridging the generation gap between our elders and the youth of today. I believe it is fair to say that there is a general consensus that our children are America's future, and without them we are hopeless. Therefore, the investment in our children is of high priority. However, because they are of such high priority, senior citizens across the country justifiably feel as though they have been put on the back burner, and their voices must wait until more important issues have been addressed. Because of this type of attitude by society at large, valuable contributions that senior citizens make are often underestimated, minimized, and many times taken for granted.

Arguably, one of the best programs this half of the century, the Foster Grandparent Program, is a chance for old and young Americans to build a bridge that answers each other's needs, and a chance to get to know each other better.

First of all, this program gives low-income senior citizens a chance to continue to live a full life in their Golden Years by giving back some of the wisdom, patience, caring, humbleness and love to troubled kids who desperately need it. Many of these kids are disabled and chronically ill, homeless, illiterate, physically, emotionally and mentally abused, boarder babies, and juvenile delinquents. Instead of sitting at home watching TV, listening to the radio, or even reminiscing on bittersweet memories of days when needed and depended upon, as society often portrays them, this program affords our elderly an opportunity to remain physically and mentally active, sharp-witted and spirited in their daily service.

Secondly, children ranging from newborn babies to teenagers with exceptional or special needs are able to attain the goal of living independently through receiving what all young people need most, warmth, friendship, gentle hands, identity, self-esteem and love. Consider all the retarded children in special centers and homes who receive just the basic care from overworked, underpaid staff, confused and troubled kids who cannot get along with others, and may eventually end up in the streets or in prison unless they get help, children in wheelchairs with learning disabilities, physical handicaps, who are blind or deaf, that need extra attention and someone to believe in them in order to develop, to learn, to contribute, to have a chance like you and I did.

What about the single parents, not adults, but young teenagers commonly referred to as babies having babies?

These circumstances are not excerpts from a movie script or pages from the number one best-selling novel, this is reality that is happening more often than we realize. We are only reminded of these situations when we go home from a day's work and look at the evening news on TV, or as we drive by special schools or institutions. Who do you think spends countless hours with these children, I don't. I am busy trying to support myself during the day, just as most people are. Volunteers participating in OAVP programs love to help others. That is why they are so special.

Though I have been referring mainly to the Foster Grandparent Program, both the Senior Companion Programs and Retired Senior Volunteers Programs are equally as valuable and rewarding. What makes the three programs so special is that they are funded, monitored and supported by ACTION. ACTION does not view older citizens as feeble and exhausted, but as invaluable resources capable of improving the quality of life of those whom they come in contact with.

The track record of the OAVP Programs have been and still are impressive, from the East Coast to the West, but just as our world is ever so changing, evolving and growing, so must we. As one of our representatives stated, it is not enough for Congress to simply say, these programs will be okay, funding increases across the board must be implemented in the National Service Budget Request to Congress. How may we reap the benefits from such effective productive programs if we do not invest into them?

We ask that when new funds are available for community, State and national programs the existing projects be allocated cost-of-living adjustments before funding new projects. We also feel that ACTION is one of the best kept secrets this country has. ACTION has the nucleus, knowledge and experience that should be built upon, not duplicated. Again, investing in something that works.

Lastly, we would like to see a one-time stipend increase for Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions, along with additional funds for public and private nonprofit organizations who, alone, cannot afford to sponsor an OAVP program without government assistance.

In closing, I would like to leave you with this thought, the great use of life is to spend it on something that will outlast it.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Louis Fontenot follows:]

STATEMENT OF LOUIS FONTENOT, DIRECTOR, FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

Thank you for taking the time to listen to all of the testimonies from people who represent and support the Older American Volunteers Programs. We all feel it is our responsibility to proclaim the wonderful and important contributions that senior citizens bring to our youth, to our communities and to our Nation.

My name is Louis Fontenot and I am the Director of the Foster Grandparent Program, sponsored by the Volunteer Center of Los Angeles. My participation at this hearing is mainly to impress upon you some important issues and concerns that I believe are worthwhile. My hopes are that not only will the OAVP Program be reauthorized and included in the Clinton National Service legislative plan, but even more so that one of America's most precious resources be embraced by our new administration; this concept most commonly phrased is "Bridging the Generation Gap between our elders and the youth" of today.

I believe it is fair to say there is a general consensus that our children are America's future and without them, we are hopeless. Therefore, the investment in our children is of high priority. However, because they are of such high priority, senior citizens across the country justifiably feel as though they have been put on the "backburner" and their voices must wait until "more important issues" have been addressed. Because of this type of attitude by society at large, valuable contributions that seniors make are often underestimated, minimized and many times, taken for granted.

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Instead of sitting at home watching TV, listening to the radio or even reminiscing on bittersweet memories of days when needed and depended upon, as society often portrays them, this program affords our elderly an opportunity to remain physically and mentally active, sharp-witted and spirited in their daily service.

Secondly, children ranging from newborns to teenagers, with exceptional or special needs are able to attain the goal of living independently through receiving what all young people need most; warmth, friendship, gentle hands, identity, self-esteem and love.

Consider all the retarded children in special centers and homes who receive just the basic care from overworked, underpaid staff. Confused and troubled kids who cannot get along with others and may eventually end up in the streets or prison unless they get help. Children in wheelchairs, with learning disabilities, physical handicaps, who are blind or deaf that need extra attention and someone to believe in them in order to develop, to learn, to contribute, to have a chance like you and I did. What about the single parents? Not adults, but young teenagers commonly referred to as "babies having babies."

These circumstances are not excerpts from a movie script or pages from the number one best selling novel. This is reality that is happening more often than we realize. We are only reminded of these situations when we go home from a day's work and look at the evening news on TV or as we drive by special schools and institutions. Who do you think spends countless hours with these children. I don't. I'm busy trying to support myself during the day just as most people are. Volunteers participating in OAVP Programs love to help others! That is why they are so special.

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The track record of the OAVP programs have been and still are impressive, from the east coast to the west. But just as our world is ever-so changing, evolving and growing, so must we. As one of our representatives stated, it is not enough for Congress to simply say these programs "will be okay." Funding increases across the board must be implemented in the National Service budget request to Congress. How may we reap the benefits from such effective, productive programs if we do not invest into them?

We ask that when new funds are available for community, State and national programs, existing projects be allocated cost of living adjustments before funding new projects.

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Lastly, we would like to see a one-time stipend increase for Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions along with additional funds for public and private non-profit organizations who, alone, cannot afford to sponsor an OAVP program without government assistance.

In closing, I would like to leave you with this thought, "THE GREAT USE OF LIFE IS TO SPEND IT ON SOMETHING THAT WILL OUTLAST IT."

Thank you.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Mr. Fontenot.

You provoke me to make a comment when you talk about funding increases, not because I disagree, but because I agree wholeheartedly. Over the years that I have been in Congress, I have seen where the domestic programs have come before the Congress, the Congress has chosen to do current level funding, which is actually a loss, because if they don't get the cost of living increase, then they lose money because the real dollar is much less valuable than the dollar that we are actually transacting our business with.

But where we have not done that is in defense. For the last 12 years, we have spent money on defense, defense, defense, and that isn't too bad. I was a Marine, and I believe in a strong America. I believe in a strong defense, but let me tell you where that defense money we have been spending has been going, it has been going for B-1 Bombers that can't fly. It has been going for Bradley Machines that don't work.

In fact, in the Summit Budget Agreement that we reached a couple of years back that became so sacred, and the walls that protected the defense budget became so sacred that within those walls existed 12 systems that did not work either because they were failed theories, or because they were technologies that some other technology had been developed that negated them, and yet, because they were defense contractors and contractors in particularly influential Congresspeople's districts, they weren't cut, even though the Pentagon said, "We no longer need these programs," and there have been billions of dollars to these programs that we have been giving annually current level funding.

If you go back 12 years in current level funding, you will find that where the past administration used to love to refer to, we are spending more dollars now than we have ever spent on education, on those juvenile diversion program projects, they really were not in terms of real dollars. They were spending just a small percentage of what should be spent to, as you said in your testimony, provide for our greatest natural resource, our young people in this country.

If there was anything we could do that we need to do, it would be to ensure that those young people had the opportunities you talk about in your testimony, because only in that way can they grow up to have the advantages that the country promised them and be worthwhile individuals, and have pride in themselves, and confidence in their future. So I want to thank you for your testimony.

With that, we are going to turn to the most delightful lady that I have met in a long time, and especially when she talks about her

experiences with the small babies that she takes care of, Ms. Vera Wright, and I notice that at the end of your written testimony you have a small personal story to tell us, and I hope it is along the lines of the one you shared with us last night.

Ms. WRIGHT. Thank you, Congressman Martinez. I am Vera Wright with the Foster Grandparent Program in Los Angeles County, U.S.C. Medical Center. I have been there for almost 8 years now.

I came to the Foster Grandparent Program by way of advertisement in my community multipurpose program. The advertisement called for senior citizens to volunteer at pediatrics to give TLC, tender loving care, and I had not been able to work, I am a beautician, I had an accident and injured my left side and my right hand, so I wasn't able to work. So, of course, I thought, anybody can give tender loving care. I applied, and immediately started as a volunteer foster grandparent.

I had never been a foster grandparent before, and had only been in the hospital a few times, but the thought of giving more tender loving care to hospitalized babies seemed so exciting, I still get excited when I talk about it. I joined up after my interview, and I was able to get my preference to the age group, I chose newborns to 1½ years old, because I knew I could sit and I could handle them.

During this time, I learned how to take care of tracheotomy babies, and colostomy, and who had never eaten before, and for months upon months in the hospital, they were unable to eat because they couldn't swallow, they didn't learn to swallow. So I proceeded to help them by massaging around their throats, and making swallowing sounds and gestures before them which, of course, they learned right away.

The doctors and nurses welcomed the sight of me so many times coming in when they knew that they were short-staffed and they wouldn't have a nurse to help a nurse, or a nurse to help a doctor when examining one of the patients, I would hold them and talk to them, and tell them it is going to be all right and, of course, the babies would quietly endure whatever the operation or whatever for the time being would be, and then I would get to cuddle them and quiet them and put them back to bed.

They call me the miracle lady because I am able to with the sound of my voice and the touch of my hand, I am able to quiet any crying baby that I have contacted in the past time that I have been there. So it seems that I am able with my voice when I touch them or handle them, it calms them down, even when mothers can't.

On days when it is not so busy, I get to read to the larger kids, and play games, and take them for walks to the playroom. They have a playroom there, it is called child care—I am forgetting the name of it now, but anyway, they go and they see movies, and they get to play games, whatever they want, and they like to have me come down, and help them to paint and finger paint and whatever, so I do.

I have learned that when I have an open honest talk with teenagers who have attempted suicide, I tell them how old I am and what a shame it is that they are in their teens, like 14, 16, 17, and

they want to end their life. I say, "Here I am, 80 years old, and I am trying to live as long as I can, and you haven't begun to live, and you are trying to take your life. I am struggling trying to live, and you are attempting to die, what a shame," and, of course, my talks with them relax them and they begin to tell me why that they want to take their life, and some of the times it is really not even worth talking about. They disagreed with their parents, and perhaps one of their siblings, and they decide it is not worth living because nobody agrees with me.

This program has been a blessing to me. It has kept me active, enabled me to live independently on my own. I honestly don't know what I would have done without the Foster Grandparent Program. I get a well-balanced nutritious meal each day I volunteer, and I meet new friends, new people every day. I am always looking for a new challenge at the hospital.

I think I have found one, a very mature five-year-old girl has a heart problem and skin condition, and she is overweight. She has an adult appetite, and she smiles at me, and says to me she can't eat the carrot sticks and the celery that they give her, it doesn't taste good, she wants french fries, or she says, "I would rather have some meat and some potatoes." So, of course, they think, since I can teach a child that has never eaten how to eat that I certainly will have some type of magic to teach this child to replace mashed potatoes and meat with carrot sticks and sliced tomatoes arranged beautifully on her plate, but it hasn't happened so far, but that is the challenge for me.

I thank you for letting me share this with you.

[The prepared statement of Vera Wright follows:]

STATEMENT OF VERA WRIGHT, FOSTER GRANDMOTHER, LAC/USC MEDICAL FACILITY

My name is Vera Wright and I am a Foster Grandmother. I have been volunteering at Los Angeles County/University of Southern California Medical Facility for almost 8 years now.

I came to the Foster Grandparent Program by way of an advertisement in my community's Multi-Purpose Center newsletter. The advertisement called for senior citizens to volunteer at Pediatric Pavilion to work with hospital patients who were children ranging from newborn to 18 years old.

I had never been a volunteer before and had only been in a hospital a few times. But the thought of giving more tender, loving, care to hospital babies seemed exciting! So I joined up. After my initial interviews, I started working with LAP babies ranging from newborn to 1½ years old. During this time, I learned how to take care of TRAK & COLOSTOMY infants. The doctors and nurses welcomed the help of a confident volunteer, especially when staff is stretched thin. Through the years, the medical team at the hospital have given me a nickname. They call me the "Miracle Lady" because of the special way I handle the babies that no one else seems to be able to calm down, even the mothers of the babies.

On days when it is not so busy, I get to read, play games or take walks with the larger children. Sometimes, I talk with teenagers who have attempted to commit suicide. I tell them my age, how much I love life and want to go on living for as long as I can. Sharing these types of thoughts along with personal, private stories of my life always seems to help each one. I have learned that when I have an open, honest talk with teenagers or take the time to play a game they may be interested in and getting them to think about the fun things life has to offer, it relaxes most children. Soon they are smiling and talking freely about their problems.

This program has been a blessing for me. It has kept me active and enabled me to live independently, on my own. I honestly do not know what I would have done without the Foster Grandparent Program. I get a well-balanced, nutritious meal each day at my volunteer station. I have new friends and meet great people just about every day. I am always looking for new challenges at the hospital.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you very much.

Listen, let me tell you something, if you can figure out how to do this with her, I think we can patent that, and we can all get our kids to eat the things they don't like to eat.

Ms. WRIGHT. That is my next project.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you.

Ms. Robinson, when you were talking about the situation over at the Nelles School, is this the same reformatory that has been there in Whittier for all these years?

Ms. Robinson, yes, that is correct. The Youth Authority took it over in 1941, I believe.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Yes, and I remember that was there when I was just very, very young and that goes back in the thirties, and that was there then.

Ms. ROBINSON. Yes, in fact, we just celebrated, the Whittier State School, as it was originally named, just celebrated its 100th year. We combined that, so it has been a long time. It has been there a long time.

Chairman MARTINEZ. The thing that intrigued me about your program and what you are doing there is how much it really should be linked with things that the Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Act is trying to do. This year, in the reauthorization, when we reauthorize it, because of testimony we received from the juvenile court judges, and everyone else, that we needed to put more emphasis on prevention rather than incarceration. Of course, you already have the young people in there, but still there is time for prevention measures.

What I was wondering about is if in your programs there are they linked in some way to some of the funds that come from the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act?

Ms. ROBINSON. There currently are funds coming in, not to our particular institution, however, there are some coming in from the juvenile—I am not exactly sure how it is named, but it definitely has that title in it, juvenile delinquency funding, and it is going to some of our other institutions for employment programs and things of that nature. So there is a linkage there. I don't know exactly the amount of money at this time, or exactly how much, but there is some going there, not at our particular site, though.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Because I am wondering how we could link this as we move forward with the Foster Grandparent Program because you are using Foster Grandparents there at the Nelles school. In that regard, I am wondering, a couple of questions, do you have any idea what happens to these kids after they leave the school there, after they have had that experience with that Foster Grandparent?

Ms. ROBINSON. Well, usually, the relationship is usually terminated by the ward usually rolling out into the community. Once they are in the community, there is basically no more contact with the Foster Grandparent, being that that Grandparent is assigned to the site only, and they go back out into the community with their family, whoever it is that they have been paroled to.

Chairman MARTINEZ. But do you think the experience has been positive enough for them to have a lasting effect from it?

Ms. ROBINSON. Definitely. As Manny mentioned, many of the wards do write the Grandparents back, try to call, and that type of thing. They try to keep in contact, and we try to allow the Grandparents to write to them, and try to keep in contact.

However, because of the laws and different things of that nature, and for their own safety, we don't allow them to give out home numbers, or home addresses, or things of that nature, but through the institution, we try to do that.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Do you get a response that way?

Ms. ROBINSON. Yes, we do. In fact, one of the young men that was recently paroled, Manny had mentioned, we had a Grandmother to pass recently, he was just paroled, and he had expressed interest in wanting to even come to the funeral. He wanted to be there because he loved her quite a bit, so it is definitely true. We try to do that.

But there probably could be more in other ways. Maybe Grandparents assigned to parole offices, and some kind of linkage through the parole unit, because it is very difficult. We pour a lot of time through volunteerism, and things of that nature in the institution, but these young men have to go back out into the community, they have to go back out in some of the same neighborhoods, and the home boys are waiting, and it is very difficult for them with all the things that they get from us, the home boys are out there, the negative influences are there, and so they definitely need continuous interaction, and continuous support, and so some linkage with the parole units would be very helpful.

Chairman MARTINEZ. One of the activities that is prescribed in the Foster Grandparent Program is working with youth at-risk, and we have heard other instances of where and how this is done. I don't think I have ever seen or heard of an instance that it is done in an institution like this exactly how you are doing it. Is your program there unique, is it something, or do you know of other programs like this that are run like this?

Ms. ROBINSON. We have one other site in Northern California, our Northern Institution where we have Foster Grandparents there also, within the California Youth Authority only. I know of no other sites or departments outside of the California Youth Authority that have Foster Grandparents. I know the Department of Corrections doesn't, but that is basically due to the age. We could not have a program there because they have adult offenders, but I do not know of any city or county facilities that have programs for them.

Chairman MARTINEZ. It sounds like a great idea what you are doing there. Let me ask you, has there been any study on the work you are doing as to what the effects of it are, do you know?

Ms. ROBINSON. There have been studies on volunteerism as a whole within in the department.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Only volunteers?

Ms. ROBINSON. Yes, only volunteers.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I am more concerned about what happens to the inmates themselves, what positive experience, and I was wondering if any study has been done of—I guess, since you don't allow the contact afterwards, that nobody really tracks them to see

how they do, and what affect they have had from that experience, so there probably hasn't been.

Ms. ROBINSON. No, I don't know of a study along that line.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I would be very interested in having somehow a study commissioned that would give us the result of that because I have to believe that it would be very productive. It would show that it has been very productive, because it goes back to the experiences I have had at Boys Town with sitting in one of these homes for a couple of days, or visiting in one of these homes for a couple of days where—the homes there in Boys Town, they have professional parents. These people are sometimes parents of their own children, natural children, and you have to really love children to want to come into a place like Boys Town, and be assigned to a home as a professional parent for these other children.

Your constituent, Walt Hickey, talks about a program that they are engaged in over there that is identical to the Boys Town program where they provide—not in that they provide a home for the young people to stay in, but that they provide the kind of training, manners at the table, et cetera, and teach them how to be courteous, and everything, because that is what they do in these homes in Boys Town. These professional parents really teach them just about living, how to be responsible to each other, how to be responsible in their own home, how to react to situations with their parents, et cetera, et cetera, and someone talked about the kinds of kids.

People don't realize it, but in Boys Town, in these different homes, there are young people there that actually have killed someone, and you couldn't tell which one it is by visiting and talking to them, or going to the recreation center and meeting and talking to them. You could never in a million years, and you have to understand that whatever happened back then that caused them to do that was desperation.

We visited with one young person who his father, his real father, natural father, was doubling up his fist and punching him in the face trying to knock him cold, and the young boy was only 11 years old. This boy got so desperate that at the last beating that he took from his father, he jumped and ran out of the house, jumped in the first car that he found open, and somehow was able to figure out how to hotwire it. He had never done it before, and he got that car started because all he could think about was survival, getting away, and he led highway patrolmen on a 70-mile-an-hour chase until the car crashed, and they were able to get him. Fortunately, that young person is assigned to another home now, a Foster Parent home, with some people that really care about what happens to him, and he is being well taken care of.

I think these homes are positive, but how we duplicate them around the country is a question of how we use programs like yours as models for other programs, and that is what really concerns me in the reauthorization of this.

At this particular time, I am going to ask Ms. Woolsey, because she is going to have to leave to get to an airplane, if she has any questions at this time?

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say that when you were talking about prevention, that is exactly the line of

thought I had as I listened to all of these wonderful panel members. Anything we can do to prevent and divert our youth from becoming incarcerated is a plus for this world of ours, for this Nation, and everything we can do to start before a youngster is even conceived by educating the mothers and the parents regarding prenatal/postnatal care and services, and nutrition will keep these youths, in the long run, possibly away from being incarcerated, and it would be better for all of us.

I am the least senior member of the Budget Committee in the House of Representatives, and as that least senior member, and a freshman, one of the two freshmen on the committee, I found myself having the courage and being uppity enough to confront many of the conservative Democrats on our committee who seem to think that for every dollar we were going to cut, if we cut any from defense, we were going to have to cut an equal dollar from our social programs, and from the programs that we have ignored for the last 12 years.

Well, I feel certain that we changed quite a few of those attitudes because of stepping up to the bat, and up to the plate, and saying, "No way, that isn't what the public wants right now. They want an investment in our human beings, they want an investment in our children, an investment in our seniors, and not only to reinvest and refund the programs that are working well, but to increase those funds to make up for what we lost by ignoring these programs for the last 12 years."

You can count on me, Mr. Chairman, to be with you to support these programs that are working so well and to, in the long run, reinvest here at home and in America.

Chairman MARTINEZ. Thank you, Ms. Woolsey, and I want to thank you for coming because this makes this an official hearing. Your attendance here makes this an official hearing, which then allows us to have it as a part of the permanent record as we move toward reauthorization, and it is very important that we have done this. Thank you again.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you for inviting me to do this with you.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I have just a couple of questions more to ask of this panel.

One, Louis, you were talking about the Foster Grandparents, and them serving as role models for these young people, especially young people at-risk. This is something that we have heard a lot about as we have studied the program. Could you maybe give us, maybe related to some experience that you have witnessed, how this works?

You also mentioned in your testimony the National Service Initiative and how these programs should be included, and this service should be included in that, so I would like you to elaborate a little bit on that. Can you discuss how this particular program works with these particular youth at-risk, and the Foster Grandparents being role models for them.

Mr. FONTENOT. My program also has several Foster Grandparents serving in a juvenile justice center facility, Central Juvenile Hall, the Dorothy Kirby Center in the City of Commerce, and I find that out of all my sites—I have 12 of them throughout the county—that at these two sites where Foster Grandparents are

working inside of closed locked gates and doors, my attendance there at these sites are the best. You would think just the opposite where seniors are working with babies and small children, instead of seniors working with kids who have problems, and that you don't have to deal with this type—you know, they are not your problems, why should you have to deal with them. Well, my seniors at these two sites, this is where my attendance is the best, and I often have my Foster Grandparents asking me to come and visit them during their 4 hours of service.

Mr. Manuel Torres, a gentleman who runs a boys club in East LA, he is also a role model for Beau Miller's Casa de la Jolla. He grasped at the chance to get into the program, into the Foster Grandparent Program because, though he is the Director of a Boys Club, and he does volunteer community service, he wanted to get his foot into the door so that he can get into Central Juvenile Hall.

One time I came there for a regular site visit, and I asked him to take me on a tour, show me what you do, and he works inside the classrooms, the teacher speaks English, most of the kids are bilingual, but the teacher has a problem communicating effectively with these children, so he acts as an interpreter. He asked one kid, who is about 8 years old, he asked him, "What did you do, why are you in this, why are you in this facility," and the kid picked up his hand and made a fist like a gun, and shot like that, 8 years old and he shot guns, he has hurt somebody with a gun.

I have many stories like that. We have Foster Grandmothers who work at Optimist's Boys Home in Pasadena, and this one lady, she just came to me last week in my office, and she said that for several years she has been receiving the wrong type of medication, so her doctor recommended that she take a break, a rest. So she came into my office crying that she has to leave some of her kids, some of her girls, who she is teaching how to crochet, how to act like a lady, because none of these young girls have ever been taught by their mothers how to act like a lady.

As you said, sometimes your grandchildren often come to you and ask you questions instead of going to their parents. Well, it is the same way with other children who don't have grandparents. They would rather not ask their mother or their fathers, because their mothers and fathers are doing wrong also.

There are many stories that I can't get to come to my mind of these types of relationships, so many stories. I had one lady who told—I can tell you stories all day long, I really could, and that is the request you asked of me.

We have an Assistance League of Southern California who is a daycare and nursery school for children from about 40 different countries. We have a lot of different races and ethnic groups who come to America, and who work, the parents work, and while the parents are working, of course, they bring their kids to the Assistance League, and the kids there identify with the Foster Grandparents there because when they go home they do not have anybody in their family to talk with them.

I am kind of getting off the subject here. I am thinking about a lot of different things.

Chairman MARTINEZ. What you are doing, though, is you are relating personal experiences, and the real question was, why or how

should this type of service be included in the National Service, and you really laid it out, it is because of the kind of work it does. It takes care of working with young people at-risk who have nobody to talk to and, sometimes, nobody to love them. If you want to talk about our people as a natural resource, and how do you develop that natural resource, and one of the ideas of National Service is to do community work. What greater community work can you do than providing a lot of the young people with that one ingredient that is lacking in their lives that will cause them to be a success. I can relate back to a teacher that, at the time she slapped the devil out of me, but at the time it was the best thing she ever did for me. She straightened me out and taught me that I could learn. From that one experience, I went on to a lot greater successes.

Well, all people need something in their lives, and these Foster Grandparents who have lived their lives, the best example is sitting here right in front of us, Ms. Ortiz. Like you said, you have lived long enough to tell when they are telling a lie, but I will bet you the one thing you never do is tell them they are lying, you kind of bring them around to getting the truth out of them.

Those are invaluable experiences, and you have really answered the question I was asking, why and how should this be a part of the National Service? The why is because of the service it would provide to those young people that it could very well, those single experiences, change their whole life. And you have outlined a couple of experiences. The idea that sometimes the young ladies who are being taught to act as ladies were never taught that by their mothers because their mothers weren't doing the right thing, and they are in a facility like this, and the Foster Grandparents can help.

Probably you take for granted that young people are born with inherent knowledge of right and wrong, they are not, they are taught right and wrong. In the environment, if something seems right, they are going to do it, and they need somebody else from a different kind of an environment to show them that that is wrong, and this is the right thing to do.

So I think you have answered the question very well, and thank you, Mr. Fontenot.

Go ahead.

Mr. FONTENOT. You asked Pam, Ms. Robinson, does she think that the relations, while the elder or the grandparent and the youth, while they do have a relationship, but when they separate does the child, the youth, the teenager, does he or she learn anything after treatment, or after care, or after their release, and that is hard to say. It depends on the situation.

Like I said, when that young child, the eight-year-old, all he knows is guns, how to shoot somebody where I was taught reading, sports, these things I was taught the same as he was taught. So, in that situation, he probably will go back to the streets, if he is released, with his home boys, and doing whatever, but the point is that maybe this gentleman, this Foster Grandparent, can teach him something other than what he knows.

Like I said earlier, there are a lot of times when children are just not taught. They don't know any better because they are just not taught. They are in an environment where they are forced to listen

to somebody, whether it is a staff member, whether it is a teacher, whether it is a counselor, whether it is a peer. So, hopefully, with the placement of Foster Grandparents in this environment, they will be forced to listen to something that will do them some good.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I think the important thing is that once they have had that experience, that positive experience, and depending on how positive it was, and how much of an impression—like I will never forget that teacher, her name was Mrs. Casens, and it was the sixth grade, I will remember her forever. I think of her a lot of times.

One time, Terry Ovalle was testifying before my committee, and he said there is nothing so rewarding to a teacher as when she sees that light go on, he or she sees that light go on in that young person's eyes that indicates that they have now learned that they can learn. That is exactly what happened to me, and I did see Mrs. Casens, who I thought at the time was the meanest thing in the world, smile from ear to ear, the first time I ever saw a smile, but she realized that I learned that I could learn.

I think that the positive experience with this particular individual from the boys club, that young boy has been given an example of what is right and wrong, and he is going to remember it. If that person has had that kind of impact on him, and he goes back, he may still get into some trouble, and the home boys may be an influence, but there is a great potential, too, that that memory will cause him, at some point in time, at a very crucial time, to decide, "Hey, I am going to get out of this, I am going to break away from this."

Mr. FONTENOT. Maybe later on down the road, but at some point, yes.

Ms. ROBINSON. I just wanted to make one further comment along those lines, and this is just for information, but it is so critical because the things that are happening out there on the streets with our young people are so serious, and the involvement with the Foster Grandparents just being there and talking with them is teaching them basic respect of other human beings who are different from you.

We went to an orientation class when the young men are transferred from the reception center and clinic, they are sent to our receiving unit and there all the programs get an opportunity to come and orientate these young men as to the services provided at Nelles. There was a class of 22 young men, first-time commitments there at Nelles, and I just decided to ask the question, how many of you are in here for Murder 1?

There were 22 young men in there and, I counted them, 15 were in there for Murder 1 as a result of gangs, or whatever, just that there is no respect for human life, and it is very serious, and the violence levels of the young men that are incarcerated at Nelles have increased over the years. Over more than half of the institution now, the young men there are there for more violent crimes, so just more programs, the Foster Grandparent, the combination of the Foster Grandparent and the wards they are just a combination that work, and they are very beneficial, and if we can just expand on that because they are our future also.

Chairman MARTINEZ. I agree.

Let me tell you something, I listened to LA Today this morning, and for half an hour all they did was talk about all the murders that took place around LA in the last few days. We are becoming a very violent society. We are coming to a point where we are losing the sight of how we can teach our young people different values, and we had better get active because, if we don't, we are going to have some real problems.

I want to thank each of our witnesses today for coming and sharing your concerns, and your points of view with the subcommittee. As I said at the outset, I believe that these programs represent among the strongest kinds of investments we can make as a Nation in this valuable and important resource we call our young. The paybacks in service and continued vitality of older Americans results in immediate and dramatic dividends. We have heard that here today. It produces healthier seniors, happier citizens, and excellent support for program recipients.

In that regard, we will hold additional hearings on these programs over the coming months, including the joint hearing with the Select Education Subcommittee on the entire range of federally supported volunteer programs. Given the earnest support from the administration, the present administration, for reaping the benefits of volunteerism, and maximizing the investment in the Nation's human resources of whatever age, I believe that we stand on the threshold of a new renewal, and that through the programs, such as the Older American Volunteers Programs, we can recover much of the spirit of neighbor helping neighbor that is so necessary, I believe, to Mr. Clinton's renewal of the American life.

Finally, thank you again, Ms. Woolsey, as she has just left, for joining me today, and the subcommittee now stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:20 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

[Additional material submitted for the record follows:]

STATEMENT OF MARCYLOUISE O'WARD, DIRECTOR, RETIRED SENIOR VOLUNTEER
PROGRAM, VOLUNTEER CENTER OF LOS ANGELES

In the 8 years I have been with the RSVP/VCLA, I do not recall any elected official going to the lengths you and your committee have to provide those on the front lines, administering OAVP's, the opportunity to provide input on what we feel is needed to enhance our programs. For this interest, I thank you.

I would like to take this opportunity to provide some background on our particular project. RSVP/VCLA was one of the first grants awarded in Los Angeles. We are currently in our 21st year of service to the community and, in what is becoming a rarity, we have remained with the original sponsor. Our geographic boundaries cover the following areas: portions of South Central Los Angeles and Koreatown; Little Tokyo; Chinatown; Watts; Downtown Los Angeles; Boyle Heights; Lincoln Heights; El Sereno; Highland Park; Eagle Rock, and the City of Glendale. Our program area covers some of the most violent areas of Los Angeles. While we are funded for a total of 160,000 hours, in 1992 our total volunteer hours exceeded 176,000. We have over 550 active volunteers in any given quarter. According to ACTION, RSVP/VCLA is one of the most ethnically diverse programs in the United States. The majority of our volunteers are low income females of color. The primary languages of many of our volunteers include: Japanese; Spanish; Cantonese; Mandarin; Korean; Armenian, and Tagalog. English is the primary language of approximately 40 percent of our volunteers.

The majority of RSVP/VCLA's volunteers work with the senior population in senior nutrition programs, senior centers and nursing homes. However, a small but growing number are now working with inner-city youth in various settings.

Of major concern to many OAVP Directors is that seniors will be left out of the Clinton National Service Plan. While President Clinton has publicly recognized the value of senior volunteer service, I felt he was being "politically correct" and question whether there is a true commitment to the Nation's seniors. It is strongly felt that the OAVPs should serve as the foundation of the Clinton National Service Plan. The infrastructure is in place at ACTION, all that is needed is restructuring and strong leadership . . . something that we have not seen at ACTION in the last 12 years. The current problems within ACTION have come from weak and inadequate appointments, a lack of commitment and a narrow vision of the capabilities of seniors in general. (I would like to point out that on a State level, our ACTION staff has been superb.) I feel very strongly that ACTION should be restructured so that it becomes the focal point for all federally-supported volunteer service initiatives, including any new national service initiatives.

Section 223 (Minority Group Participation) needs to be strengthened to authorize development of materials targeted to individuals whose primary language is not English. While this is not a problem for many OAVP programs, it is of primary concern to our program. We just do not have the resources available to provide these materials. I rely on volunteer interpreters to translate to those volunteers who do not speak English. In addition, many OAVPs do little or no outreach to minority populations because of the language barrier.

It is imperative that Section 226 (Cost of Living Adjustments) be strengthened to ensure as new funds become available, existing programs will be taken care of before funding any new projects. As the economic situation in California continues its decline, more and more programs are being relinquished by sponsors because adequate funds are just not available to run the programs.

Another trend that I am witnessing is that many new sponsors, in an effort to obtain a relinquished grant, are not providing for adequate staffing for the programs. RSVP projects, in general, need more staff support due to the large number of volunteers we deal with. The RSVP/VCLA project operates on a virtual shoestring with no other staff for day-to-day operations. While our sponsor does provide accounting staff to assist with financial reports and issuance of out-of-pocket reimbursement checks to our volunteers, there are no surplus dollars for additional staffing. (My workday begins around 7:30 a.m. and if I am lucky, I will leave the office by 5 p.m. I average at least 1½ to 2 hours of paperwork/reading each evening. My average work week is Monday through Saturday. Fortunately, I love my job and do not mind what is required to keep the program running smoothly and in compliance. However, if our program had the luxury of another staff person, not only would we be able to "keep up on the paperwork," but we would be able to increase our volunteer numbers.

For our particular project, volunteer reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses (transportation and meals) is a major problem. In fact, effective May 1, we will no longer be able to provide meal reimbursement due to the loss of the bus pass subsi-

dy in the City of Los Angeles. Even with the loss of meal reimbursement, volunteers will now only be able to receive a portion of the cost of a senior bus pass because of our limited funds.

While all OAVP Directors have very specific problems in the running of our programs, the lack of available funds is probably the single most important issue that binds us together.

In closing, I would again like to thank you and your committee for the genuine concern you have shown in regards to OAVPs in relation to the Domestic Volunteer Service Act reauthorization. I am personally convinced that the Older American Volunteers Programs are one of the Nation's best kept secrets. OAVPs are "living proof" that the visionary leadership of the 1960s and early 1970s, does work. No other federally-funded program comes to mind that has consistently proven its worth year after year. All of the OAVPs do make a difference in the many lives we touch.

Thank you.

STATEMENT OF FAYE PINKETT, DIRECTOR, FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM,
PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

The role of the Older American Volunteers Programs plays a key important part of the life of the seniors who volunteer 4 hours per day, 5 days per week devoting love and attention to children who so dearly need it. The relationship the Foster Grandparent and the child build up is remarkable. It is noticed by our volunteer station staff almost immediately. Two people are helped in these programs, the older adult and the child. Most of the older adults that apply to our program are all alone, sometimes they are just widowed and have nothing to do. They feel so unneeded. Yet they have so much love and patience to give. The children reap all these benefits when they are assigned to an older person.

The ability to utilize and recruit older Americans in the south Los Angeles Community is not a problem at all. There is a large population of low-income seniors in our service area and we always have a waiting list. Our problem is we do not have the money to hire additional seniors due to the stipend they are given.

Coordination of the OAVP programs with other volunteer programs is a great asset as long as they do not duplicate services. State and Federal funds are essential if we are going to continue these programs.

The dissemination of information to all OAVP directors is highly important if our programs are going to continue to be effective to the community.

The ACTION agency should provide technical assistance when needed only. The agency should provide administrative support to programs already in existence instead of new ones.

The Older American Volunteers Programs certainly can be integrated with the Clinton administration's National Service Initiative; whereas, students could serve as interns, in-service training, literacy projects, and some staff positions or work directly in some residential day care facilities with the children.

I hope this information will help with the reauthorization of the OAVP.



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